



# Lewiston-Altura Public Schools

# SCHOOL PLANNING

# COMMUNITY SURVEY

Dear Community Members,

The School District has spent the past two years exploring options to balance the budget, improve operating efficiencies, and address our school facility needs. The District has held community engagement sessions and met with a Facility Task Force made up of parents, staff, and community members to gather ideas and feedback on how best to address these needs.

Ultimately, the District needs to develop a plan to:

- ✔ Addresses operational budget shortcomings
- ✔ Replaces aging and failing building systems
- ✔ Updates and expands classrooms to meet state guidelines
- ✔ Improves school safety, security, and accessibility
- ✔ Renovates spaces and finishes that are more than 40 years old
- ✔ Adds gym and performance space for school and community use

The cost to address these needs is greater than the District's annual operating budget can support. Thus, the School Board is considering asking voters to support one or more referendum questions. **Before a plan is finalized, the District wants to give all residents a voice in the planning process.** Therefore, we ask you to please take a few minutes to complete this important survey.

Sincerely,

Superintendent

## PLEASE PARTICIPATE IN THE SCHOOL PLANNING SURVEY IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

### ONLINE

Scan the QR code to the right with your phone camera or visit [bit.ly/communitysurvey\\_LASD](https://bit.ly/communitysurvey_LASD) to complete the survey online.

### PRINT

Download and print the survey at [www.lewalt.k12.mn.us](http://www.lewalt.k12.mn.us). Once complete, drop off or mail to **Lewiston-Altura School District, 100 County Road 25, Lewiston, MN 55952.**

### MAIL

Call **507-523-2191 + Option 4** to have a survey mailed to you. Once complete, drop off or mail to **Lewiston-Altura School District, 100 County Road 25, Lewiston, MN 55952.**

**All responses must be submitted online or postmarked by May 5, 2023.**

Scan the QR code below with the camera on your smart phone or visit the website link to complete the survey online.



[bit.ly/communitysurvey\\_LASD](https://bit.ly/communitysurvey_LASD)

# About You

Please tell us about yourself.

## 1 What is your age?

- 18–25       26–35       36–45       46–55       56–64       65+

## 2 Are you an employee of the District?

- Yes       No

## 3 Do you have school-aged children?

- Yes       No

### If yes, what school(s) do they attend?

- Lewiston-Altura Public Schools       Immanuel Lutheran (Silo) School       Other  
 St. John's Lutheran School       Home School

## 4 Do you live in the District?

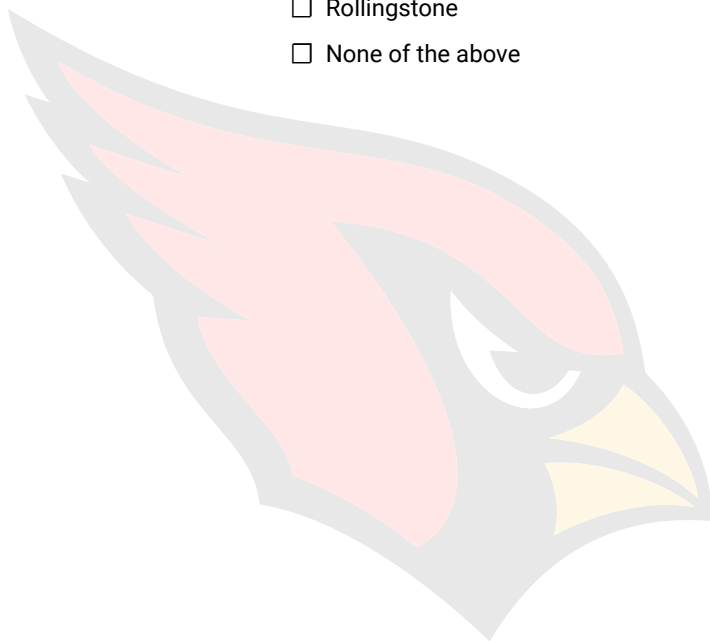
- Yes       No       Unsure

## 5 Please select all that describe you:

- Own a home in the District       Own a business in the District       Own agricultural land in the District  
 Rent in the District       Own commercial property in the District       None of the above

## 6 Where do you live?

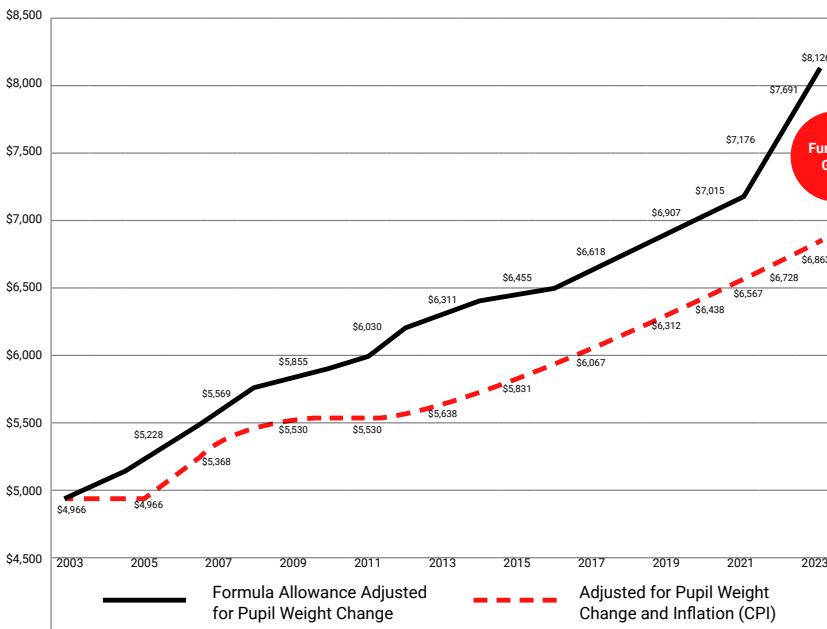
- Lewiston       Utica       Rollingstone  
 Altura       Stockton       None of the above



# School Operations Funding

The Lewiston-Altura School District is facing significant budget challenges due to **declining enrollment, increased costs, and a state funding formula that is not keeping up with inflation**. The District has addressed the financial challenges by reducing program budgets, delaying facility updates, and adjusting staffing. The District has also utilized fund balance (cash reserves), a practice not sustainable, as the District needs cash on hand to properly fund daily operations. In the past three years, the District has also filled various budget gaps with federal and state pandemic dollars. However, these are one-time funds that will not be available to the District in the future. As enrollment declines, the District will receive even less revenue from the state.

## GENERAL EDUCATION FORMULA ALLOWANCE



### DID YOU KNOW?

School districts receive the majority of their funding from the State. The largest portion of this funding, which comes from the basic general education formula, has not kept up with inflation, resulting in school districts **receiving \$1,263 less per student** than they did 20 years ago. This is a major reason why many school districts across the state are facing significant budget challenges.

The closure of the Altura building will provide approximately \$255,000 additional savings, as the District will have one less building to heat, clean, and operate. Even with this savings and the reductions that have been made to-date, the District is anticipating annual budget deficits in the years ahead.

The District will need a voter-approved operating levy or reduce operating expenses by:

- Increasing class sizes
- Reducing course offerings
- Eliminating programs and activities
- Limiting compensations adjustments

The chart to the right identifies the estimated tax impact based on property values for a \$1,000 per pupil unit operating levy.

The District would like to know your willingness to support an operational levy.

## TAX IMPACT OF BASE PLAN

TYPE OF PROPERTY	ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE	\$1,000 PER PUPIL UNIT
<b>All Taxable Property,</b> except seasonal recreational property and agricultural land beyond the dwelling value (house, garage, and one-acre)	\$100,000	\$172
	\$150,000	\$257
	\$200,000	\$343
	\$250,000	\$429
	\$300,000	\$515
	\$400,000	\$686
	\$500,000	\$858

**Based on the tax impacts shown, would you support a \$1,000 per pupil unit operating levy?**

Tax impacts are identified in the table above to the right.

- Definitely yes   
  Probably yes   
  Unsure   
  Probably no   
  Definitely no

# School Facility Updates

In addition to addressing the District's operating budget challenges, the District has been exploring options to address school facility needs to better serve students and our communities. **District voters will need to support a bond referendum to provide the funding to complete school facility updates.**

It has been 27 years since District voters supported school facility updates through a bond referendum. As a result, the District has been unable to address major projects nor renovate educational spaces to current needs. The District has identified the following needs and opportunities as they consider potential projects:

## SAFETY + SECURITY

The school entrances need to be redesigned to better regulate school visitors. Visitor entrances are needed at the main office so that guests are welcomed by staff before accessing the school. In addition, traffic flow needs to be redesigned around both schools to improve safety.

## AGING INFRASTRUCTURE + WORN FINISHES

The high school was originally built in 1965 and the elementary school in 1974. Many of the building systems and finishes are from the original construction, have far reached the end of their service life, and are in need of replacement.

## OUTDATED EDUCATIONAL SPACES

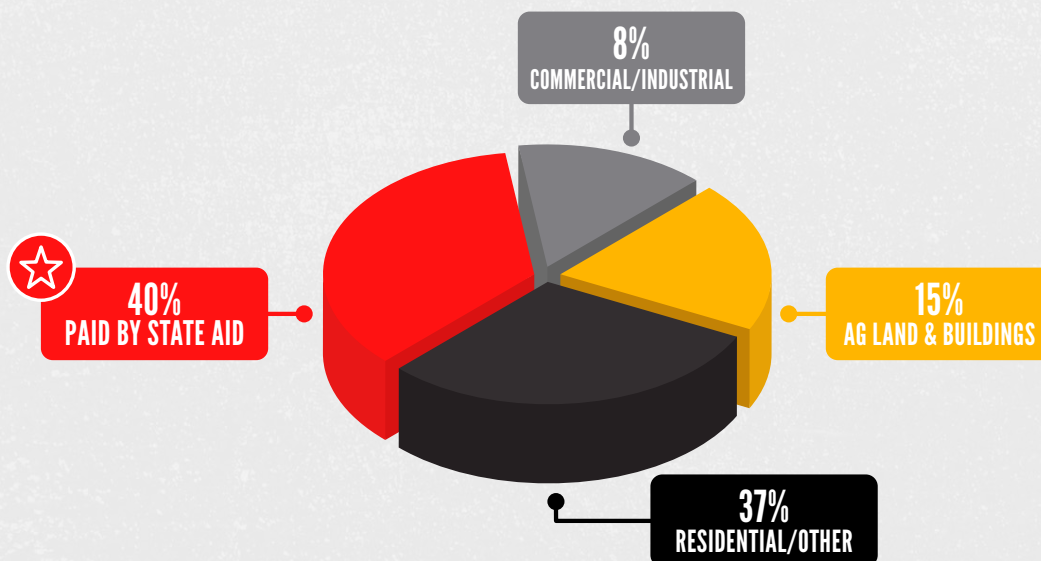
Many classrooms and the high school science labs are undersized and outdated. As a result, they lack the adequate infrastructure to support existing equipment and technologies, as well as student collaboration areas and flexible learning spaces needed for today's educational programming.

## LACK OF GYM + PERFORMANCE SPACE

The amount of gym space in the District can no longer reasonably meet school and community needs. In addition, a performance space with appropriate sound and lighting is needed for student and community performances, presentations, and large group events.

## STATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The District's facility projects would **qualify for the School Building Bond Agricultural Credit**. This credit, approved in 2017 and enhanced in 2019, reduces property taxes paid on agricultural land for school improvements by 70% for taxes payable in 2023 and beyond. **Due to the School Building Bond Agricultural Credit, the state's share of the tax burden of a bonded project benefiting our school community would be approximately 40%.**



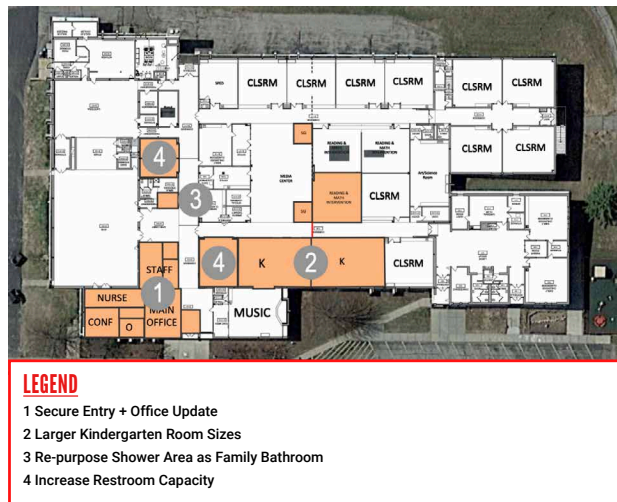


# Option 1: Academics

After reviewing all of the potential needs, the Task Force created a Base Plan that addresses the most critical academic and building needs of the District. These projects could be funded through a bond referendum. The plan includes:

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UPDATES

- Redesign traffic flow to separate bus, vehicle, and pedestrian traffic
- Remodel the front entrance to better regulate visitor access
- Extend corridor walls to the roof deck to keep noise from transferring from classroom to classroom
- Update plumbing and electrical systems that have exceeded their service life
- Upgrade gym flooring and classroom finishes
- Replace inefficient exterior windows and complete tuck pointing to address water infiltration
- Expand kindergarten classrooms
- Renovate restrooms



## HIGH SCHOOL UPDATES

- Redesign traffic flow to separate bus, vehicle, and pedestrian traffic
- Remodel the front entrance to better regulate visitor access
- Replace the heating and ventilation (HVAC) system in remaining portion of the school
- Update plumbing and electrical systems that have exceeded their service life
- Replace roof sections, inefficient exterior windows, and fire alarm system
- Repair exterior masonry and complete tuck pointing
- Renovate the Media Center and identified classrooms to create greater flexibility for hands-on learning
- Replace B Gym flooring
- Improve the choir and band rooms with additional storage, practice rooms, and acoustical panels
- Expand the Career and Technical Education (Shop) Labs to allow for additional course offerings and updated equipment
- Address Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act code compliance issues
- Update and expand weight/fitness areas and locker rooms
- Add multipurpose space for wrestling, dance, and community use
- Add a transportation garage for safely storing and repairing District buses



# Option 1: Academics

The cost to complete all of the projects identified in Option 1 is estimated at \$26.3 million. The chart below shows the tax impacts of a successful bond referendum to support these projects.

ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX IMPACT		
TYPE OF PROPERTY	ESTIMATED ASSESSMENT VALUE	\$26.3 MILLION BOND
<b>RESIDENTIAL HOMESTEAD</b>	\$100,000	\$181
	\$150,000	\$319
	\$200,000	\$457
	\$250,000	\$594
	\$300,000	\$732
<b>COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL</b>	\$100,000	\$379
	\$250,000	\$1,074
<b>AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD</b> <i>(average value per acre of land and buildings)</i>	\$4,000	\$1.52
	\$6,000	\$2.27
	\$8,000	\$3.03
<b>AGRICULTURAL NON-HOMESTEAD</b> <i>(average value per acre of land and buildings)</i>	\$4,000	\$3.03
	\$6,000	\$4.55
	\$8,000	\$6.06

**Based on the tax impacts shown, would you support a \$26.3 million bond referendum to complete Option 1 described above?**

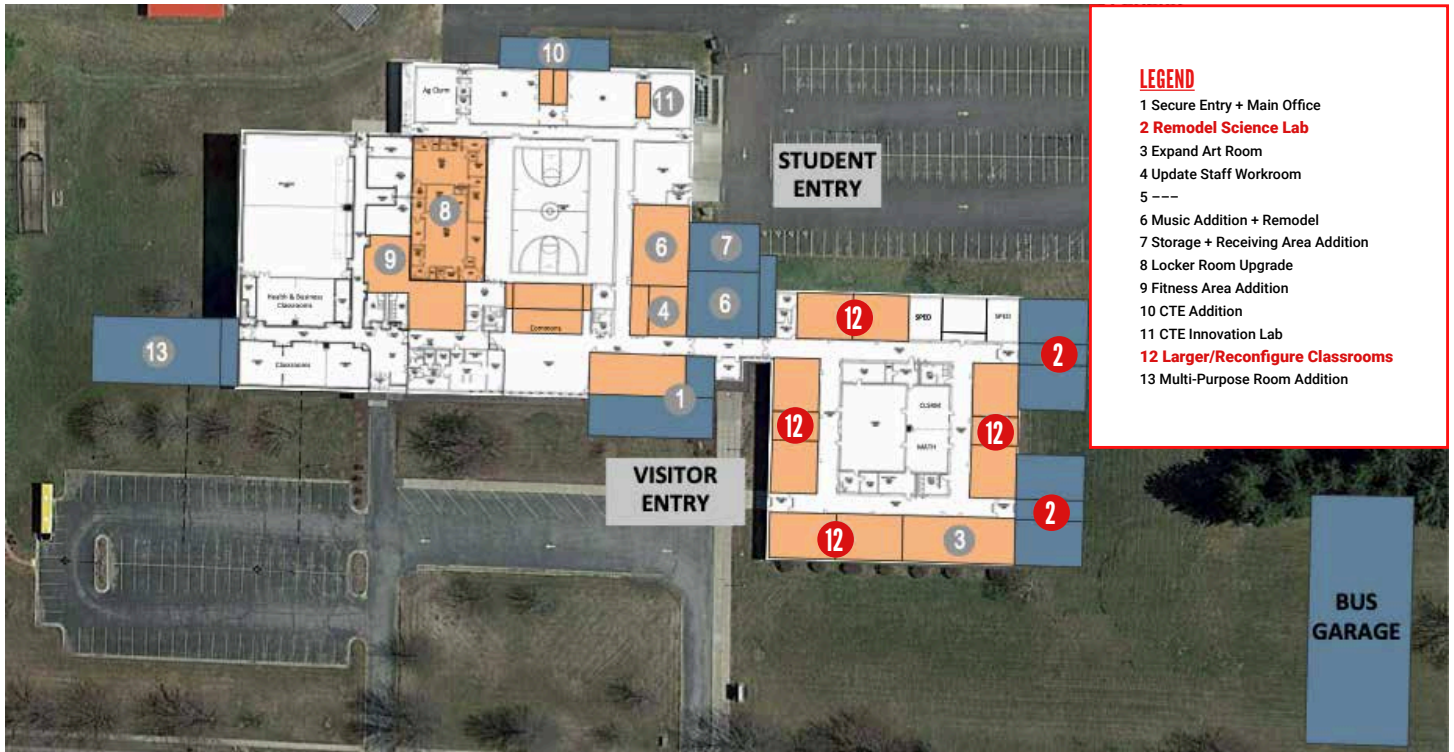
- Definitely yes
- Probably yes
- Unsure
- Probably no
- Definitely no



## Option 2: Academics Plus

This option completes all of the projects in Option 1 **AND** enlarges and reconfigures some high school classrooms to meet size guidelines and create small group learning spaces.

- Build larger science classrooms to improve spaces for students to complete labs and group projects
- Expand and improve existing art room



### LEGEND

- 1 Secure Entry + Main Office
- 2 Remodel Science Lab
- 3 Expand Art Room
- 4 Update Staff Workroom
- 5 ---
- 6 Music Addition + Remodel
- 7 Storage + Receiving Area Addition
- 8 Locker Room Upgrade
- 9 Fitness Area Addition
- 10 CTE Addition
- 11 CTE Innovation Lab
- 12 Larger/Reconfigure Classrooms
- 13 Multi-Purpose Room Addition

Do you support expanding the school updates to include the projects described above:

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Need more information

## Funding Support for Option 2

The cost to complete the additional projects is estimated at \$6.9 million. Therefore, the cost to complete Option 2: Academics Plus is \$33.2 million.

### ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX IMPACT

TYPE OF PROPERTY	ESTIMATED ASSESSMENT VALUE	\$33.2 MILLION BOND
<b>RESIDENTIAL HOMESTEAD</b>	\$100,000	\$201
	\$150,000	\$353
	\$200,000	\$505
	\$250,000	\$658
	\$300,000	\$810
<b>COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL</b>	\$100,000	\$419
	\$250,000	\$1,188
<b>AGRICULTURE HOMESTEAD</b> <i>(average value per acre of land and buildings)</i>	\$4,000	\$1.68
	\$6,000	\$2.52
	\$8,000	\$3.36
<b>AGRICULTURE NON-HOMESTEAD</b> <i>(average value per acre of land and buildings)</i>	\$4,000	\$3.36
	\$6,000	\$5.03
	\$8,000	\$6.71

**Based on the tax impacts shown, would you support a \$33.2 million bond referendum to complete Option 2: Academics Plus?**

- Definitely yes
- Probably yes
- Unsure
- Probably no
- Definitely no





## OPTION 3: ALL-IN: ACADEMICS PLUS, ARTS, AND ACTIVITIES

The bond could be further expanded to include building a gym and renovating the existing gym into an auditorium.

### ADDITIONAL GYM SPACE FOR ACTIVITIES

The existing gyms at the high school are undersized and the lack of space requires the wrestling team to practice in the lower level of the elementary school. Junior high school teams must travel to the elementary school for practices in the fall (volleyball), winter (basketball), and spring (baseball and softball until the outdoor fields are ready).

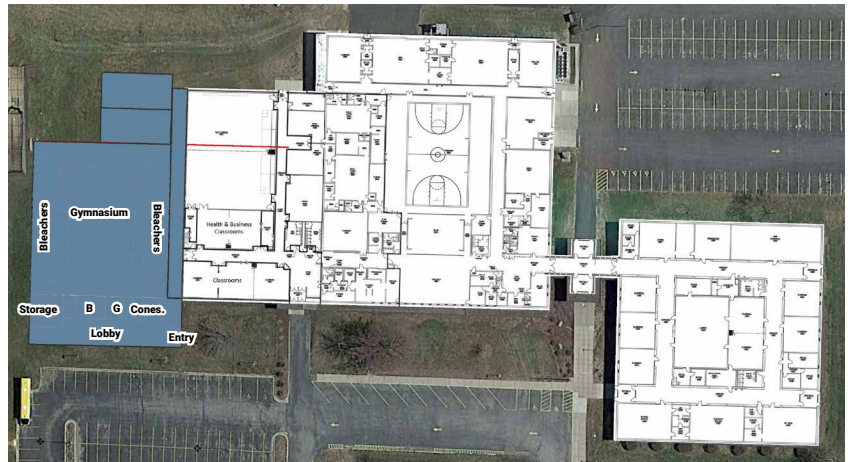
A proposed activities gym will eliminate the need to transport high school students to the elementary school for practices, as well as enable the District to have indoor spring practices in spaces more adequately designed for indoor throwing and hitting without damaging lights and walls. An additional gym would also enable the District to host tournaments, which would generate revenue for both the District and community.

#### A TWO-COURT GYM

- Provide more space for physical education
- Increase space for school and community use, especially in the winter months
- Provide needed practice space for school teams and youth programs
- Provide sufficient space to host youth sporting events

#### THE SPACE COULD INCLUDE:

- A competition gym with two cross courts
- Storage
- Lobby
- Restrooms and concessions
- Locker rooms



The District would like to know if voters would support the bond referendum being further expanded to include a competition gym.

**Do you support expanding the school updates to include a new competition gym?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Need more information

## AUDITORIUM FOR THE ARTS

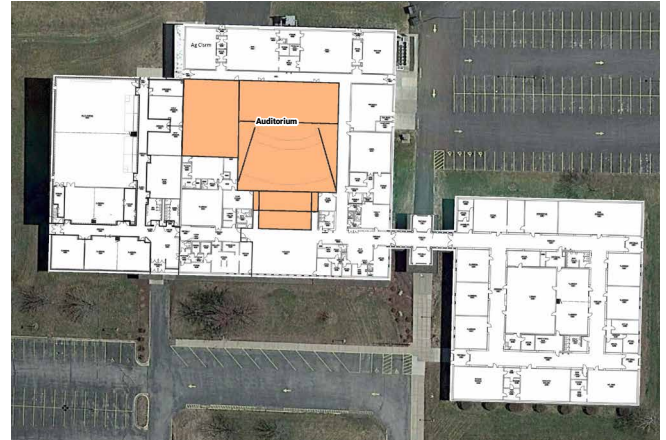
*The existing gym could be renovated into an auditorium.*

The District regularly hosts student band and choir concerts, plays, and other performances. These events are held in the gyms with bleacher or folding chair seating, and limited lighting and acoustical equipment. Rehearsals and other performance preparations are limited due to using an unsecured stage that is also easily accessed by users of the cafeteria or gym. Production choices are limited because of our restricted stage size and support spaces. This limits the depth of benefits for students from not experiencing more complex and engaging drama and musical performances.

The proposed auditorium would be used for student assemblies and events, music performances (band/choir), plays, and large group academic presentations. It would also be used for community events with visiting musicians, speakers, or larger audiences for Fools Five, Heartland Days, or other community activities.

This space could include:

- Seating for 450 people
- A stage
- Dressing rooms and a green room
- Set shop and storage
- Lobby and restroom



The District would like to know if voters would support the bond referendum being further expanded to include renovating the gym into an auditorium.

**Do you support expanding the school updates to include renovating the gym into an auditorium?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Need more information



The cost to build a gym and renovate the gym into an auditorium is \$12.4 million. Therefore, the cost to address all of the projects identified in this survey is \$45.6 million.

ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX IMPACT		
TYPE OF PROPERTY	ESTIMATED ASSESSMENT VALUE	\$45.6 MILLION BOND
<b>RESIDENTIAL HOMESTEAD</b>	\$100,000	\$277
	\$150,000	\$487
	\$200,000	\$697
	\$250,000	\$907
	\$300,000	\$1,117
<b>COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL</b>	\$100,000	\$578
	\$250,000	\$1,639
<b>AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD</b> <i>(average value per acre of land and buildings)</i>	\$4,000	\$2.31
	\$6,000	\$3.47
	\$8,000	\$4.63
<b>AGRICULTURAL NON-HOMESTEAD</b> <i>(average value per acre of land and buildings)</i>	\$4,000	\$4.63
	\$6,000	\$6.94
	\$8,000	\$9.26

**Based on the tax impacts shown, would you support a \$45.6 million bond referendum to complete Option 3: All-In: Academics Plus, Arts, and Activities?**

Definitely yes  
 Probably yes  
 Unsure  
 Probably no  
 Definitely no

## FEEDBACK + COMMENTS

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**SURVEYS MUST BE DROPPED OFF OR POSTMARKED BY MAY 5, 2023.**

**MAIL OR DELIVER TO:**  
 Lewiston-Altura Public School District  
 100 County Road 25 Lewiston, MN 55952