



**ISD #727
BIG LAKE SCHOOLS**

**2026 LEASE LEVY
REVIEW AND COMMENT
SUBMITTAL**

Presented to:

**Minnesota Department of
Education**

Draft: July 22, 2026



July ##, 2026

Mr. Willie Jett
Commissioner of Education
Minnesota Department of Education
400 NE Stinson Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55413

Subject: Proposal for 2026 Review and Comment
Lease Levy
Big Lake Schools, ISD #727

Dear Commissioner Jett:

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 123B.71, Big Lake Schools, ISD #727, hereby submits this proposal for facility improvements for your review and comment.

The School Board of ISD #727 approved submitting this Review and Comment at its July 22, 2026, School Board Meeting.

The proposed plan provides critical improvements to the High School with the replacement of their existing stadium grass field and track with a new multi-purpose turf field and track. This project will provide appropriate multi-use amenities for instruction, activities, and community use.

As detailed in the attached proposal, Big Lake Schools ISD #727 proposes to obtain financing for this project through lease purchase financing pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 465.71. The District anticipates financing approximately \$5,000,000 in project costs, which is expected to be repaid over a term of ten (10) years.

Specific details regarding the school district, the facility needs, the project scope and cost, and the plan of finance, are included in the enclosed proposal for your review and comment.

For additional information or for any questions, please contact me at your earliest convenience. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and consideration of this proposal, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Tim Truebenbach, Superintendent of Schools

cc: Angie Manuel, ISD #727 – Director of Business Services
TJ Zerwas, ISD #727 – Director of Buildings and Grounds

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In accordance with Minnesota Statute 123B.71, the School Board of Independent School District #727 Big Lake Schools submits the following educational facility proposal for Review and Comment. The project presented is the result of District and community review of facility conditions, program initiatives, surveys, and needs within the district. The specific information is as follows:

Key Information:

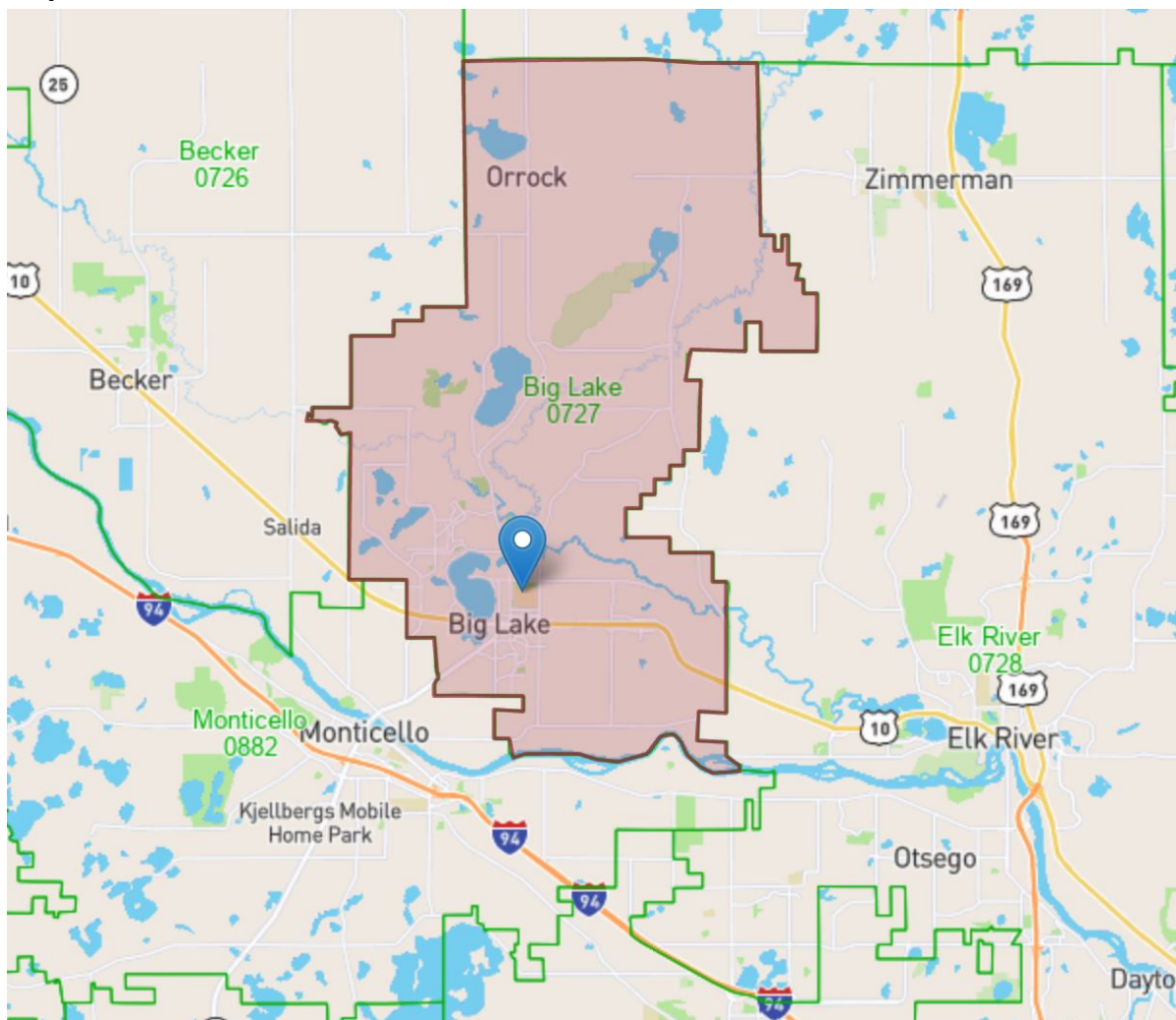
- Address: **Independent School District #727**
Big Lake Schools
701 Minnesota Avenue
Big Lake, MN 55309
Contact: Tim Truebenbach, Superintendent of Schools
t.truebenbach@biglakeschools.org
Phone: 763-262-2536
- School Board
Tonya Reasoner, Chair
Ashley Schabilion, Clerk
Amber Sixberry, Treasurer
Lenette Brown, Member
Chelsey Hancock, Member
Derek Nelson, Member
- Financing: **\$5,115,000**, including project and financing costs.
- Architect/Planner: **Wold Architects and Engineers**
50 South, 6th Street, Suite 2250
Minneapolis, MN 55402
Contact: Robert Sehm, AIA, LEED AP
rsehm@woldae.com
Phone: (612) 772-9025
- Fiscal Consultant: **Ehlers**
3060 Centre Pointe Drive
Roseville, MN 55113
Contact: Jodie Zesbaugh
JZesbaugh@ehlers-inc.com
Phone: (651) 697-8526

I. The Geographic Area and Population to be served

- a. Preschool through Grade 12 - Student enrollments for the past five years,***
- b. Current student enrollment and student enrollment projections for the next five years.***

Geographic Area Served

Big Lake Schools, ISD #727 consists of approximately 206 square miles and is home to approximately 3,104 pre-K thru 12 students and families. The district is located approximately 42 miles northwest of the Metro Area. The district serves portions of Sherburne County and has a population of approximately 21,000. The population to be served by these projects are the students, staff, and associated communities in the Big Lake Schools attendance area.

Map of ISD #727**Neighboring School Districts**

with contiguous borders include:

- ISD #477 Princeton
- ISD #726 Becker
- ISD #728 Elk River
- ISD #882 Monticello

I. The Geographic Area and Population to be served (continued)**Population Served: Enrollment History and Projections**

ADM Served per MDE							
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
K		236	219	278	252	231	235
1		231	217	229	278	226	237
2		215	206	226	231	269	232
3		221	197	216	230	239	284
4		239	206	210	224	240	253
5		234	232	216	219	226	237
6		248	228	239	213	211	220
7		262	236	241	236	223	208
8		236	263	248	245	228	226
9		258	235	273	262	242	227
10		224	250	241	272	265	247
11		214	210	236	230	260	261
12		170	206	198	223	222	241
		2,988	2,905	3,051	3,115	3,082	3,108
		2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	
K		219	216	214	213	212	
1		224	214	210	207	207	
2		239	227	215	212	209	
3		234	245	233	221	218	
4		285	241	252	241	228	
5		247	281	237	248	237	
6		229	235	270	227	238	
7		218	225	235	270	227	
8		209	218	224	234	269	
9		217	199	208	214	224	
10		222	209	199	208	214	
11		233	210	200	190	198	
12		243	229	208	197	187	
		3,019	2,949	2,905	2,882	2,868	

Enrollment is declining because incoming kindergarten classes—shrinking due to falling birth rates in Sherburne County—are smaller than graduating 12th-grade classes. Notably, the 2026–2027 5th-grade cohort represents the District’s post-pandemic "bubble class."

2. List of Existing School Facilities**a. By Year Constructed****b. Facility Use****c. Assessment of the extent to which alternate facilities are available within the School District boundaries and in adjacent School Districts.****Description of Existing Facilities and Utilization**

Big Lake Schools is currently operating two Elementary Schools, one Middle School and one High School. The District Office is located within Independence Elementary School. Community Education and Early Childhood are located within Liberty Elementary School.

Schools	Grade Org.	Original Building	Additions	Site Size in Acres	Adjacent Public Acres	Building Area SF
<i>Liberty School</i>	<i>EC - 2</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>36.08***</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>172,500</i>
<i>Independence School*</i>	<i>3 - 5</i>	<i>1981</i>	<i>1987, 1998</i>	<i>Shared*</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>153,100</i>
<i>Middle School*</i>	<i>6 - 8</i>	<i>1966</i>	<i>1974, 1984, 1987, 1998, 2002</i>	<i>Shared*</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>150,900</i>
<i>High School*</i>	<i>9 - 12</i>	<i>1994</i>	<i>1997, 2002</i>	<i>Shared*</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>261,681</i>
<i>Maintenance Building*</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1983</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Shared*</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5,750</i>
<i>Other District Owned Land**</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>40**</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>

* Shared: Common Site Total = 129.53 Acres

** Other District Owned Land - Liberty Fields and Open Parcel = 40 Acres

*** Site Size: Liberty School (Building Parcel Only) = 36.08 Acres

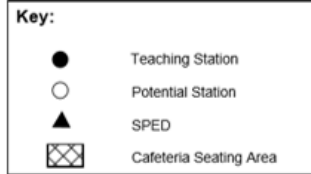
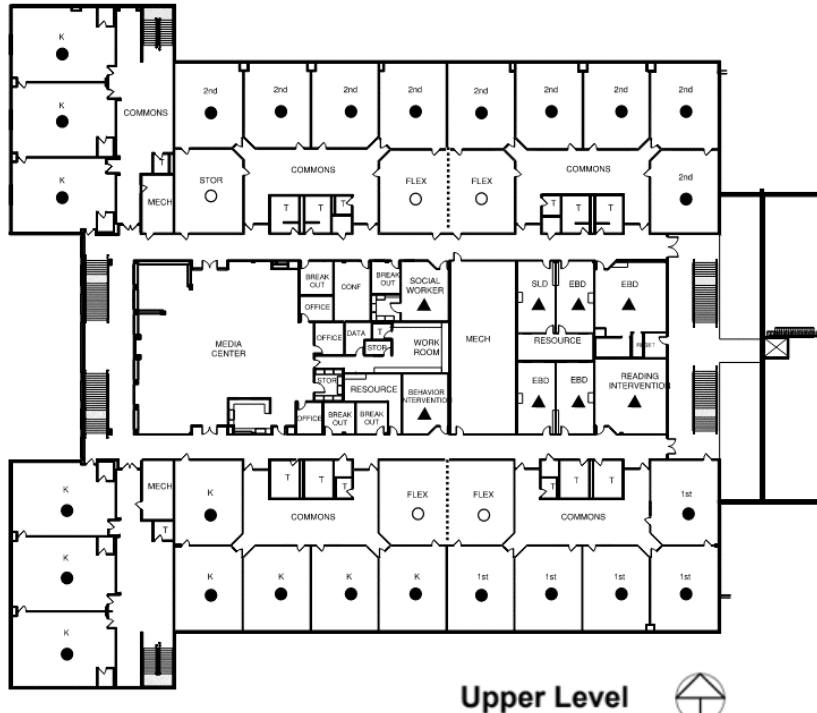
Available Alternate Facilities

District facilities struggle to meet demand for physical education, school activities, competitions, and community education and use spaces. The district has reviewed the availability of other facilities both within and outside of the School District. No other facilities of significant size and adequate function have been identified to meet the needs of the district.

2. List of Existing School Facilities (continued)

Liberty ES Capacity Diagrams

For reference only



Student Capacity:

EC:	(13) x 22 =	286
K:	(17) x 22 =	374
1:	(5) x 24 =	120
2:	(9) x 27 =	243

Total EC-2: 1,023

Additional Capacity:

Potential	(6) x 22 =	132
Potential Capacity		1,155

Cafeteria Analysis

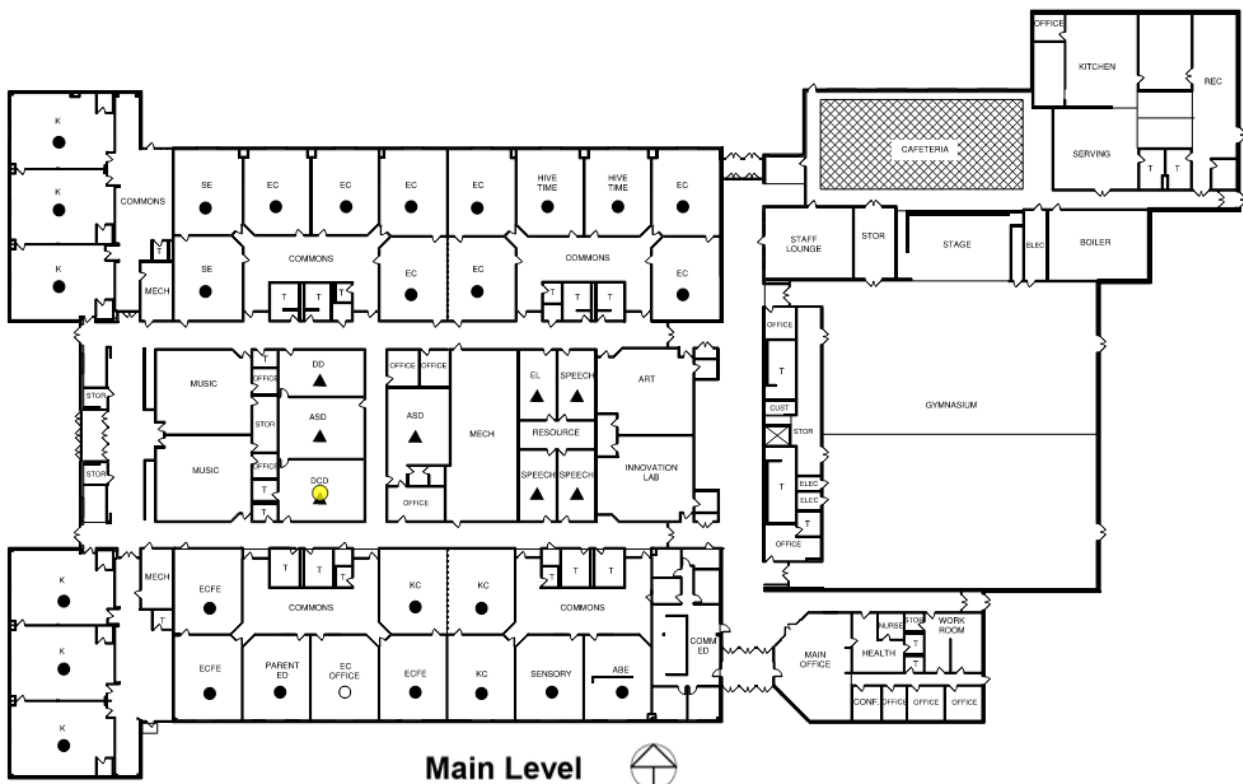
2023-24 1,023/10 x 12 = 1,227 SF

Potential 1,155/10 x 12 = 1,386 SF

Existing SF 3,500 SF

Notes:

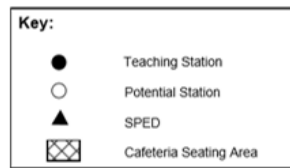
- 2023 - 2024 Enrollment: 761
- Capacity Analysis does not include Kid's Club, Community Ed, or Hive Time



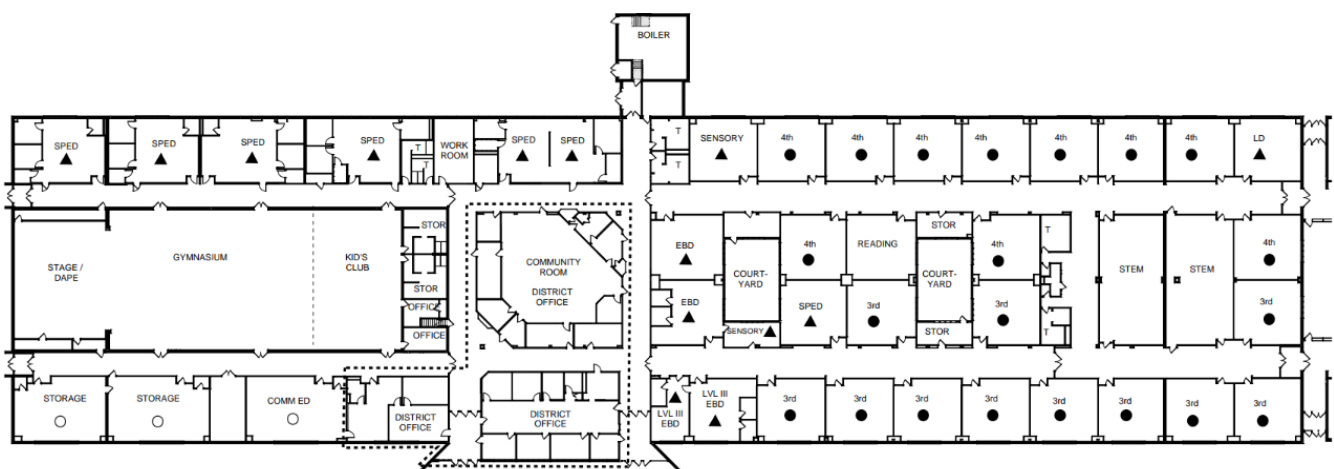
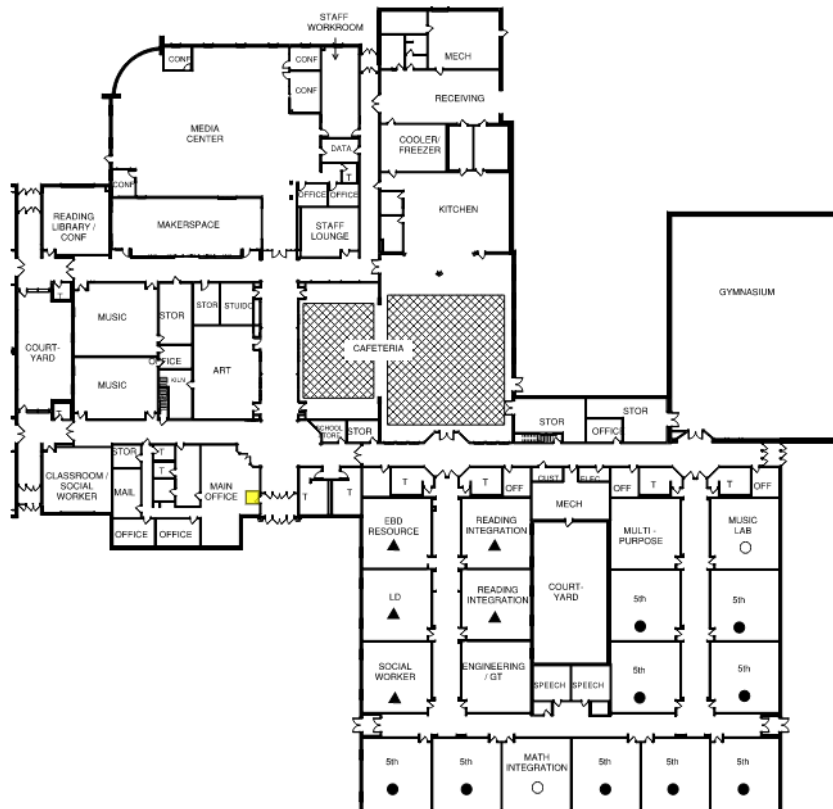
2. List of Existing School Facilities (continued)

Independence ES Capacity Diagrams

For reference only



Student Capacity:		
3:	(11) x 27 =	297
4:	(10) x 27 =	270
5:	(9) x 27 =	243
Total 3-5:		810
Additional Capacity:		
Potential	(5) x 27 =	135
Potential Capacity		945
Cafeteria Analysis		
2023-24	810/6 x 12 =	1,620 SF
Potential	945/6 x 12 =	1,890 SF
Existing SF		4,300 SF
Notes:		
- 2023 - 2024 Enrollment: 673		
- Capacity Analysis doesn't incl. Kid's Club, Community Ed, or Head Start		

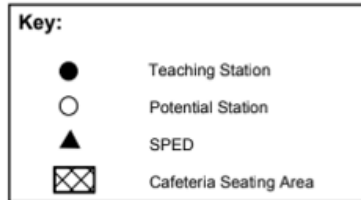


Main Level - West

2. List of Existing School Facilities (continued)

Middle School Capacity Diagrams

For reference only



Student Capacity:

(29)	Stations
x 85%	Utilization
x 30	Students
740	Students

Total 6-8:

Additional Capacity:

(15)	Stations
x 85%	Utilization
x 30	Students
383	Students

Total Potential 6-8:

1,123 Students

Cafeteria Analysis

2023-24 740/3 x 12 = 2,960 SF

Potential 1,123/3 x 12 = 4,492 SF

Existing SF = 4,300 SF

Notes:

- 2023/2024 Enrollment 661
- 4 Total PE classes



2. List of Existing School Facilities (continued)

High School Capacity Diagrams

For reference only

Key:	
●	Teaching Station
○	Potential Station
▲	SPED
▣	Cafeteria Seating Area

Student Capacity:

(42)	Stations
x 85%	Utilization
x 30	Students
Total 9-12:	1,071

Additional Capacity:

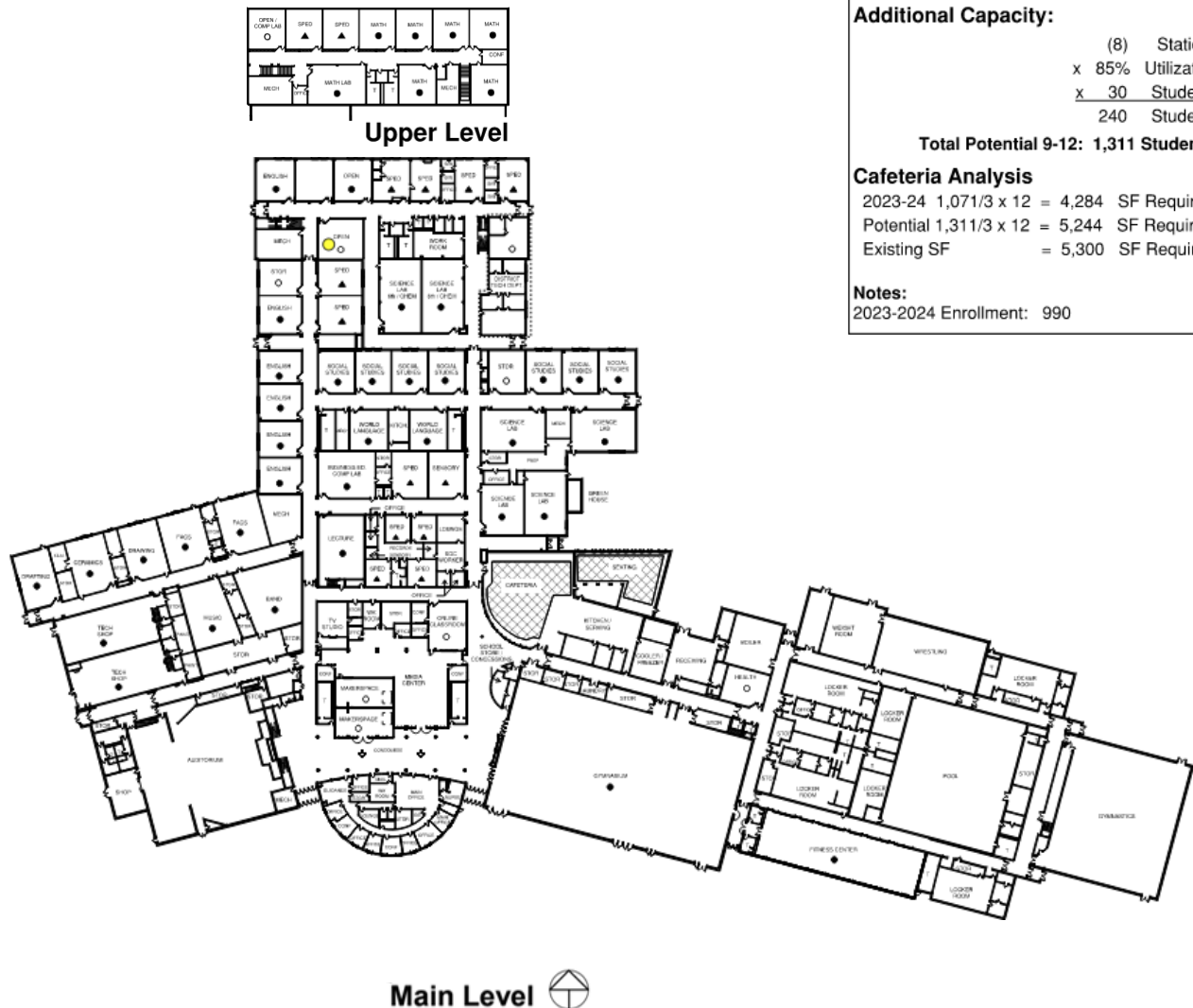
(8)	Stations
x 85%	Utilization
x 30	Students
Total Potential 9-12:	1,311

Cafeteria Analysis

2023-24	1,071/3 x 12 =	4,284	SF Required
Potential	1,311/3 x 12 =	5,244	SF Required
Existing SF		= 5,300	SF Required

Notes:

2023-2024 Enrollment: 990



Main Level

2. List of Existing School Facilities (continued)

District Aerial Map



High School Aerial Map



2. List of Existing School Facilities (continued)

Liberty ES Aerial Map



Independence ES Aerial Map



2. List of Existing School Facilities (continued)

Middle School Aerial Map



3. List of the Specific Deficiencies of the Facilities

- a) Demonstrating Need
- b) Process Used to Determine Deficiencies
- c) List of How Deficiencies will be Addressed.
- d) Specific Benefits to Students, Teachers, and Community

Process Used to Determine Deficiencies

The district has a history of collaborating with the community and facility committees to assist in determining appropriate strategic direction for their facilities, including several initiatives in 2021 to address curriculum and delivery, site safety, and activities. The district also worked collaboratively with Wold Architects and Engineers to study buildings capacity, physical conditions, and other needs. With data prepared, multiple meetings took place over the last few years.

School leaders and other stakeholders have identified key areas that challenge the district's ability to meet the needs of all students. Some scope of the items reviewed include:

- Physical Conditions (*LTFM vs. additional investment*)
- Educational Adequacy and Criteria (*including enrollment, capacity, functionality for students, specialty programming, 21st Century learning environments etc.*)
- Extra-curricular and Activities
- Community education and use (*amenities and access*)

Meetings

- School Board
- District Administration
- Buildings and Grounds
- Activities, Athletics, and Community Education and Use
- Community
- PTO, Other Associations, and Committee Members

These meetings informed prioritization and focused on developing needs, criteria, and options. The recommendations aim to address these deficiencies and sustain current investments in education.

As a continuation of the 2021-2025 process, the Board had several meetings to discuss the best strategy for implementation. The criteria outlining the deficiencies, and the subsequent prioritizations of the facilities work are included on the following pages.

3. List of the Specific Deficiencies of the Facilities (continued)**PHYSICAL CONDITIONS****General Overview:**

- The District and Design Team have reviewed existing physical conditions and a facility analysis.
- Understand and develop criteria and approach to prioritizing addressing the most critical needs.

Givens:

- A long term approach for addressing needs must be developed to assist with future decisions.
- Continue to make an investment in LTFM.
- Accessibility, functionality, and other compounded factors should be considered when developing maintenance approaches, prioritizations, and schedules.
- Protect existing assets. All facilities should be reviewed and considered.
- Work at the facilities should coincide with other District initiatives when feasible.
- It is important to provide all students with a suitable learning environment designed for their needs.

Site Overview:

- There is no need to purchase additional land or to acquire / develop a different site.

High Priority (Must Do):

- The stadium track should provide a quality running surface and be scheduled for replacement.
- New stadium field (artificial turf for multi-purpose and more frequent use)

Medium Priority (Consider If Possible):

- Parking should be provided in proximity to fields, indoor activity spaces, and other programs.

Low Priority (Consider with Future / Long Range Planning):

- District maintenance facilities should meet modern operational standards and contain appropriate maintenance amenities and utilities.

Activities and Extra Curricular**Overview:**

- Facilities struggle to meet demand for physical education, school activities, and competition spaces.

District Givens:

- Leverage existing assets and partnerships.
- Provide appropriate spaces to meet the high demand for phy-ed, school activities, and competitions.

High Priority (Must Do):

- Improve / Increase community / District access and use to activity spaces.

Medium Priority (Consider If Possible):

- Address scheduling conflicts for activities, community education and use.

COMMUNITY USE**Overview:**

- Facilities struggle to meet demand for community education and events.

Givens:

- Explore partnerships with local businesses and the Community. Consider overlaps of use and other efficiencies.
- Provide sufficient space for community education and events. The facilities are a central hub for community connections and the appropriate space for activities and events that support the community's lifelong learning, well-being, and engagement.

High Priority (Must Do):

- Improve / Increase community access and use to activity spaces.

Deficiencies that will be addressed:

- Physical Conditions will be improved at stadium areas that have seen minimal to no re-investment to this point (the track is original, from 1994).
 - This will also allow the district to allocate future LTFM funds across the district to address additional physical needs.
- District offered programs should also have District supported spaces.
 - Invest in multi-purpose spaces to address accessibility and flexibility for programming.

Benefits to Students, Teachers, and Community:

- Increased and improved instructional space for phy-ed classes.
- Multi-purpose field will allow multiple uses on a regular basis.
- Expanded extra-curricular spaces for all to use (including community).
- Improved physical conditions for users.
- The district will continue to make its facilities and site amenities as accessible as possible to neighboring residential areas as well as other visitors, students, parents, and staff who may visit.

4. Description of the Projects including:

- a) Sites and Outdoor Acreage
- b) Square Footage Allocations
- c) Estimated Expenditures
- d) Schedule

a) Sites and Outdoor Acreage

- Site acreage for all District properties are included in Section 2 of this Review and Comment.
- Proposed Site Modifications:
 - Middle / High School - No additional site acreage is needed. The proposed project will replace the existing field and track in their current location. Site plan below.



c) Estimated Expenditures

PROJECT	Totals
Approx. Project Budget	\$ 5,005,000
Construction	\$ 4,350,000
Track	\$ 1,650,000
Multi-Purpose Field	\$ 2,700,000
Fees / Testing / Services	\$ 435,000
Design, Testing, Prof. Services etc.	\$ 435,000
Contingency	\$ 220,000
Costs of Issuance	\$ 110,000

Note: *It is anticipated by the district that any surplus from the above noted project (if any) will be used for yet unidentified expenditures that may include facility maintenance as the needs may arise.*

Operational Expenditures:

The district does not anticipate any increase in operational expenditures.

d) Schedule

Review and Comment Submittal to MDE
 Review and Comment MDE Review
 Project Design and CD Preparation
 Project Construction Documents Issue
 Project Construction
 Project Completion

July ###, 2026
 August - October 2026
 Start November 2026
 January 2027
 June 2027 – August 2027
 September 2027

5. Description of Single User Facilities

- a. A description of the project's plans for gender-neutral single-user restrooms, locker room privacy stalls, or other spaces with privacy features, including single-user shower stalls, changing stalls, or other single-user facilities.

N/A. This project does not include any restroom or locker room facilities.

6. Specification of the Source of Project Financing including:

1. Applicable statutory citations,
2. The scheduled date for a bond issue or school board action,
3. A schedule of payments, and
4. The effect of a bond issue on local property taxes by property class and valuation.

Availability and Manner of Financing

Big Lake Public Schools, Independent School District No. 727, proposes to finance improvements to its track and field facilities through a lease purchase financing pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 465.71. The District anticipates financing approximately \$5,000,000 of project costs, which is expected to be repaid over a term of ten (10) years.

The District has existing debt that is scheduled to expire with taxes payable in 2027. As a result, the District anticipates that the financing is not expected to result in an increase in the District's overall tax rate for its debt service and capital levies.

Ehlers has prepared the following schedules which have been included in the Appendix of this document:

- 1) Estimated sources and uses of funds for the proposed financing
- 2) Estimated payment schedule

Independent School District No. 727 (Big Lake), MN

\$4,990,000 Certificates of Participation, Series 2026A

Dated: February 1, 2027

Sources & Uses

Dated 02/01/2027 | Delivered 02/01/2027

Sources Of Funds

Par Amount of Bonds	\$4,990,000.00
Reoffering Premium	199,076.80
Total Sources	\$5,189,076.80

Uses Of Funds

Total Underwriter's Discount (1.500%)	74,850.00
Costs of Issuance	110,000.00
Deposit to the Project Fund	5,004,226.80
Total Uses	\$5,189,076.80

Independent School District No. 727 (Big Lake), MN

\$4,990,000 Certificates of Participation, Series 2026A

Dated: February 1, 2027

Debt Service Schedule

Date	Principal	Coupon	Interest	Total P+I	Fiscal Total
02/01/2027	-	-	-	-	-
10/01/2027	-	-	158,915.00	158,915.00	-
04/01/2028	365,000.00	5.000%	119,186.25	484,186.25	643,101.25
10/01/2028	-	-	110,061.25	110,061.25	-
04/01/2029	420,000.00	5.000%	110,061.25	530,061.25	640,122.50
10/01/2029	-	-	99,561.25	99,561.25	-
04/01/2030	440,000.00	5.000%	99,561.25	539,561.25	639,122.50
10/01/2030	-	-	88,561.25	88,561.25	-
04/01/2031	465,000.00	5.000%	88,561.25	553,561.25	642,122.50
10/01/2031	-	-	76,936.25	76,936.25	-
04/01/2032	485,000.00	5.000%	76,936.25	561,936.25	638,872.50
10/01/2032	-	-	64,811.25	64,811.25	-
04/01/2033	510,000.00	5.000%	64,811.25	574,811.25	639,622.50
10/01/2033	-	-	52,061.25	52,061.25	-
04/01/2034	535,000.00	5.000%	52,061.25	587,061.25	639,122.50
10/01/2034	-	-	38,686.25	38,686.25	-
04/01/2035	565,000.00	5.000%	38,686.25	603,686.25	642,372.50
10/01/2035	-	-	24,561.25	24,561.25	-
04/01/2036	590,000.00	4.000%	24,561.25	614,561.25	639,122.50
10/01/2036	-	-	12,761.25	12,761.25	-
04/01/2037	615,000.00	4.150%	12,761.25	627,761.25	640,522.50
Total	\$4,990,000.00	-	\$1,414,103.75	\$6,404,103.75	-

Yield Statistics

Bond Year Dollars	\$30,426.67
Average Life	6.098 Years
Average Coupon	4.6475802%
Net Interest Cost (NIC)	4.2392976%
True Interest Cost (TIC)	4.1827470%
Bond Yield for Arbitrage Purposes	3.9014840%
All Inclusive Cost (AIC)	4.6067125%

IRS Form 8038

Net Interest Cost	3.8499865%
Weighted Average Maturity	6.082 Years

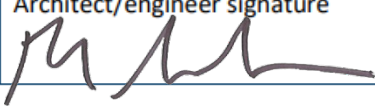
7. Obligating Documents

Attachment 1
Review and Comment
Section #6 Documentation
(as amended by the 2014 Legislature)

Documentation obligating the school district and contractors to comply with items (i) to (vii) in planning and executing the project:

- (i) The school district will be in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, section 471.345, governing municipal contracts issued for this project.
- (ii) The school district and the architects will include elements of sustainable design for this project.
- (iii) If the project installs or modifies facility mechanical systems, the school district, architect/engineers and contractors will be in compliance with school facility commissioning under Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.72, certifying the plans and designs for the heating, ventilating, air conditioning and air filtration for an extensively renovated or new facility meet or exceed current code standards, including the ASHRAE air filtration standard 52.1.
- (iv) If the project creates or modifies interior spaces, the district, architects/engineers and relevant contractors have considered the *American National Standards Institute Acoustical Performance Criteria, Design Requirements and Guidelines for Schools* on maximum background noise level and reverberation times.
- (v) The project will be in compliance with Minnesota State Fire Code.
- (vi) The project will be in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, chapter 326B, governing building codes.
- (vii) The school district and the architects/engineers have been in consultation with affected government units about the impact of the project on utilities, roads, sewers, sidewalks, retention ponds, school bus and automobile traffic, access to mass transit and safe access for pedestrians and cyclists.

The school district and architect/engineers will maintain documentation showing compliance with these items upon, and subsequent to, project completion.

Superintendent signature	Date
Board chair signature	Date
Architect/engineer signature 	Date