

September 11, 2015

Willie Jett, Superintendent  
St. Cloud Area School District #742  
1000 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Suite 100  
St. Cloud, MN 56303

Dear Superintendent Jett:

Minn. Stat. § 123B.71 requires a review and comment statement on the educational and economic advisability of your proposed school construction project. Information supplied by your school district and from Minnesota Department of Education sources is the basis of this review and comment. With this positive review and comment, voter and school board approval is required in order for St. Cloud Area School District to proceed with the proposed projects.

The district shall publish a summary of the review and comment statement (the final two pages) in the legal newspaper of the district at least 20 days, but not more than 60 days, prior to holding a referendum for bonds or soliciting any bids for the construction, expansion, or remodeling of an educational facility. The Department may request a statement certifying the publication, and require the submission, review, and approval of preliminary and final construction plans.

Minn. Stat. § 123B.72 requires that a school district, prior to occupying a new or renovated facility after July 1, 2002, must submit a certification prepared by a system inspector to the commissioner and the building code official that will provide an occupancy permit. The certification must verify that the facility's installed or modified heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system operates according to design specifications and code, a system for monitoring outdoor airflow and total airflow of ventilation systems has been installed, and any installed or modified heating, ventilation, or air conditioning system provides an indoor air quality filtration system that meets ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers) Standard 52.1.

If you have any questions, please contact Chris Kubesh, Education Finance Specialist, at (651) 582-8319 or [chris.kubesh@state.mn.us](mailto:chris.kubesh@state.mn.us). Thank you for working with us to improve school facilities for Minnesota students.

Sincerely,



Dr. Brenda Cassellius  
Commissioner

cc: Dennis Whipple, School Board Chair

Enclosure

**THE COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION  
PROJECT PROPOSAL OF ST. CLOUD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #742**

A review and comment must be provided on a school district construction project proposal before the district conducts a referendum, solicits bids, or issues bonds for the project. A project proposal has been submitted for review and comment according to requirements set forth in Minn. Stat. § 123B.71, Subds 9 and 10, and Minn. Stat. § 123B.72. The district provides the following information:

1. The geographic area and population to be served,
  - a. preschool through grade 12 student enrollment for the past five years, and
  - b. student enrollment projections for the next five years.
2. A list of existing school facilities
  - a. by year constructed,
  - b. their uses, and
  - c. an assessment of the extent to which alternate facilities are available within school district boundaries and in adjacent school districts.
3. A list of specific deficiencies of the facility
  - a. demonstrating the need for a new or renovated facility to be provided,
  - b. the process used to determine the deficiencies,
  - c. a list of those deficiencies that will and will not be addressed by the proposed projects,
  - d. a list of specific benefits that the new or renovated facility will provide to students, teachers, and community users served by the facility.
4. A description of the project including:
  - a. specifications of site and outdoor space acreage,
  - b. square footage allocations for classrooms, laboratories and support spaces,
  - c. estimated expenditures for major portions of the project,
  - d. estimated changes in facility operating costs,
  - e. dates the project will begin and be completed.
5. A specification of the source of project financing including:
  - a. applicable statutory citations,
  - b. the scheduled date for a bond issue or school board action,
  - c. a schedule of payments, including debt service equalization aid, and
  - d. the effect of a bond issue on local property taxes by property class and valuation.
6. Documentation obligating the school district and contractors to comply with the following items:
  - a. section 471.345 governing municipal contracts,
  - b. sustainable design,
  - c. school facility commissioning under section 123B.72, certifying the plans and designs for heating, ventilating, air conditioning and air filtration for an extensively renovated or new facility meet or exceed current code standards, including ASHRAE air filtration standard 52.1 and
  - d. ANSI acoustical performance criteria, design requirements and guidelines for schools on maximum background noise levels and reverberation times,
  - e. State fire code,
  - f. chapter 326B governing building codes, and
  - g. 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.



## **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT**

St. Cloud Area School District is proposing a bond referendum on November 3, 2015 to finance a new high school on a new site to replace Tech High School, additions / major renovations to Apollo High School and districtwide technology and security upgrades.

The total cost of the proposed projects, including bond issuance and capitalized interest is \$167 million. The projects would be scheduled for completion in the 2016 – 2018 calendar years. Project cost estimates by location/project type are as follows:

### New High School

○ Construction	370,000 Square Feet	\$79,550,000
○ Site Purchase / Development		\$12,600,000
		<u>\$92,150,000</u>

### Apollo High School

○ General Renovations	210,000 Square Feet	\$32,733,040
○ Additions	28,000 Square Feet	\$5,456,440
○ Deferred Maintenance		\$3,552,000
○ HVAC Upgrades		\$1,600,000
○ Site Improvements		<u>\$2,943,213</u>
		\$46,284,693

### Districtwide

○ Technology Upgrades		\$4,200,000
○ Secure Entrances		\$2,148,326
○ Fees / Services / Permits / Testing		\$15,913,927
○ Contingency		\$4,633,054
○ Bond Issuance / Capitalized Interest		<u>\$1,670,000</u>
		\$28,565,307

If the bond referendum is successful and bonds are sold, the debt service on the bonds will be eligible for debt service equalization under Minn. Stat. § 123B.53, subd. 3, if the bond schedule is approved. The amount of debt service equalization aid, if any, the district receives is determined annually and is dependent upon property wealth, student population, and other statutory requirements.

The school board believes the replacement of Tech High School, major improvements at Apollo High School and the proposed districtwide projects are in the best interest of the district.

## **REVIEW AND COMMENT STATEMENT**

Based upon the department's analysis of the school district's required documentation and other pertinent information from sources of the Minnesota Department of Education, the Commissioner of Education provides a positive review and comment.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE**

Persons desiring additional information regarding this proposal should contact the school district superintendent's office.



Dr. Brenda Cassellius  
Commissioner

September 11, 2015