

# Why We Are Asking Voters to Support A 2018 Capital Building Bond Referendum

from John Larkin, Chair, Columbia Heights School Board

At the May 22, 2018 Regular Business Meeting, the Columbia Heights Public School Board of Education voted to place three separate Capital Building Bond questions on the November 6, 2018 ballot. The School Board is in complete agreement that these requests are of need and not want, are factual and confirmable, and in the best interest of students and our community.

We are asking our taxpayers to know the facts and to support the following needs November 6:

- Question 1: North Park Elementary School Improvements.
- Question 2: Columbia Heights High School Performing Arts Space Improvements.
- Question 3: Columbia Heights High School Band Room Addition

These are the same needs we asked of voters in the 2017 Bond Referendum. The only difference is this year we are providing these needs to the voters in three separate questions.

The Columbia Height School Board asks that voters consider the following:

- The decision to place these three questions on the ballot is a direct reflection of what we are hearing from our community. Many, many voters were not pleased with the outcome of the 2017 Bond Referendum, in large part because of misinformation, and as such the majority of the constituents who have met with us are insistent that we bring these needs to voters again in 2018.
- These requests, if not addressed, will not go away and with each passing year the cost for these needs will increase. School safety and security is vital and cannot be compromised. The Arts are an integral part of the curriculum and must have facilities that support programming and are comparable with other school districts in the area.
- We are addressing equity in terms of facilities and programming in our schools. Are all of our school facilities conducive to the best learning environments? Our position is that no school should be less than its peer and these requests, with voter approval, will bring that equity.
- The cost for these needs has risen due to inflation since the 2017 Bond Referendum, but the approximate cost to taxpayers through these requests has not.
- Each of our requests has been thoroughly vetted from an educational, facility and financial standpoint.

We are asking voters to know and consider the facts so that they can make informed

decisions November 6, 2018. While we completely support that voters have the Constitutional right to vote yes or no, we find it unconscionable that there is a small sector of the community who are misleading the public. We will lead on the higher ground. We will share the facts, and do our best to ensure that any misinformation is addressed with facts.

In closing, our decision to move forward with these three ballot questions is in the best interests of our students. Will you please consider the facts and in doing so, do what is best for our students? Your support through an informed decision November 6 is appreciated.

To learn more, go to [www.colheights.k12.mn.us/2018bond](http://www.colheights.k12.mn.us/2018bond), attend a School Board Listening Session or Business Meeting, contact any of us at our numbers listed at ([www.colheights.k12.mn.us/schoolboard](http://www.colheights.k12.mn.us/schoolboard)) or call the District at 763-528-4500.

Thank you.