



Dear NRHEG School District Community Members:

There are many things throughout the NRHEG School District that cause all of us to be very proud. Thanks to strong partnerships with parents and our community, our students are finding success both in and out of the classroom. In 2017 NRHEG Elementary was recognized by the state of Minnesota for “reducing the achievement gap in math,” and our high school was once again ranked among the **best schools in Minnesota** by *US News and World Report*, with 87% of our recent graduates enrolling in a post-high school institution. This is the result of our commitment to building relationships, preparing students for college and career and instilling **“Panther Pride,”** positive, respectful, responsible and safe behavior in all our students.

While we celebrate our successes, we know there are challenges ahead, including the need to **develop a plan to meet our operational budget challenges and address security, facility infrastructure and classroom upgrades** that are too large to be covered in our annual budget.

To help accomplish these goals, a Facilities Task Force made up of parents, business leaders, community members and District staff was formed. This group has studied the District’s educational and facility needs and identified the potential projects explored in this survey. **Ultimately, the Task Force’s goal is to recommend a plan to the Board of Education that reflects the priorities of the taxpayers and meets the needs of our students.** This survey is an attempt to establish a community-wide perspective.

**Please take the time to answer this survey!**

### TAKE THE SURVEY IN ONE OF TWO EASY WAYS

#### Online:

Simply go to the survey website: [www.feedback2000.com](http://www.feedback2000.com)  
Enter your Survey Access Number:  
Take the survey!

#### By Paper:

If you do not have Internet access, please return the survey to any school office or mail to:  
School Perceptions, 317 E Washington St, Slinger, WI 53086.

The Survey Access Number can be used only once. To obtain additional surveys for other adults in your household, please call the District Office at 507-465-3205.

**Please complete the survey by October 5, 2018.**

To collect this feedback, we are working with School Perceptions LLC, an independent firm with expertise in conducting community surveys. All survey data is returned to School Perceptions, and your feedback will remain anonymous.

Final survey results will be reported at the October 10th joint School Board and Facility Task Force meeting and will also be available on the District website at [nrheg.k12.mn.us](http://nrheg.k12.mn.us) on the Facility Planning page.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Sincerely,

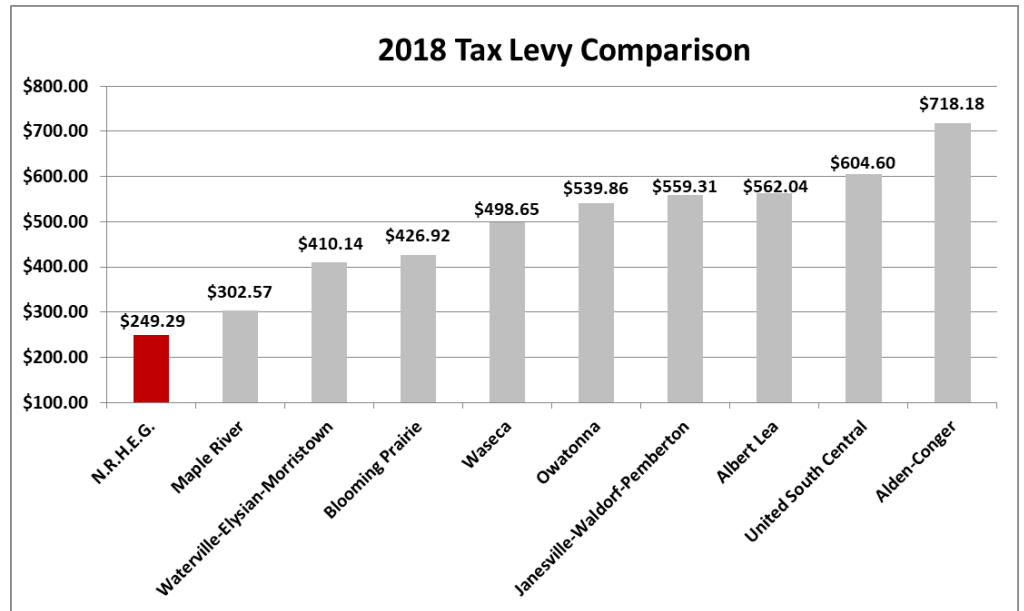
Dale Carlson  
Superintendent  
NRHEG School District

## Financial Background

### Low Taxes

The District works hard to be good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars.

As a result, the NRHEG School District portion of property taxes is **the lowest in the area and \$220.59 below the state average of \$469.88**, based on the District's average home, valued at \$122,570.

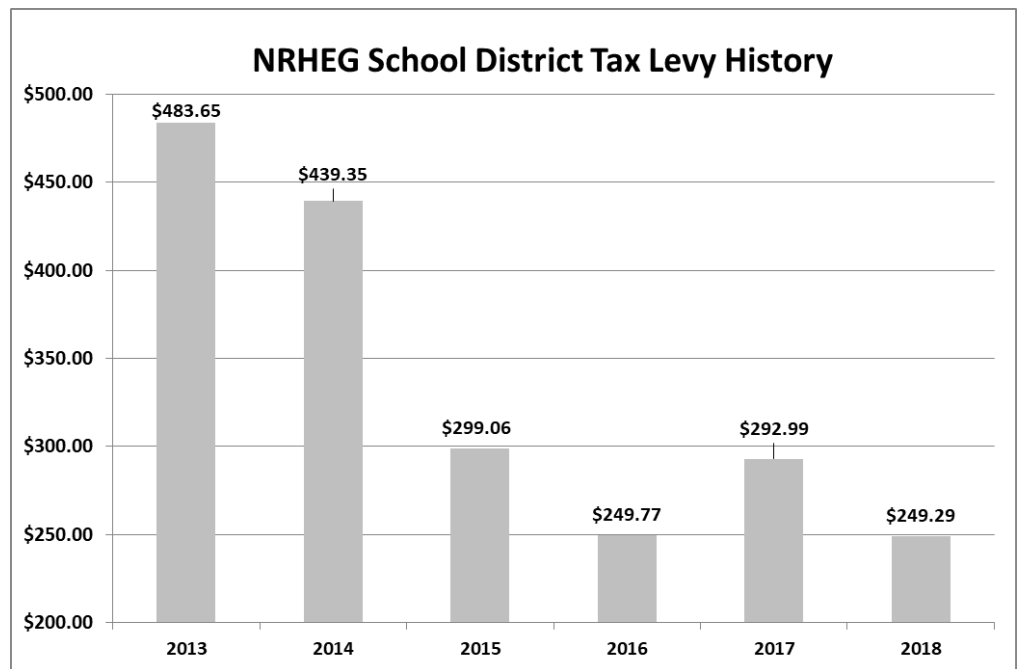


Note: Tax rates were calculated based on the District's average residential homestead property value of \$122,570.

### Declining Taxes

The NRHEG School District has worked hard to control costs while still providing high-quality programs and services for our students.

Compared to 2013, the District's tax levy has **decreased by nearly 50%**.



Note: Tax rates were calculated based on the District's average residential homestead property value of \$122,570.

Comments/suggestions:

## District Operations

The NRHEG School District, like many other Districts in the state, is experiencing budget challenges due to a variety of factors including declining enrollment (which determines the amount of money we receive from the state) and increased operating costs. Recently, the District has had to utilize our fund balance (cash reserves) to balance our budget.

As we plan for the future, we would like to know where to focus our efforts.

How important are the following?	<i>Please check your response in the appropriate box.</i>			
<p><b>Class size:</b> Currently, our elementary classes average 19 students and middle/high school 18-24 students to allow teachers to build relationships and better personalize students' education. <b>The District would like to maintain current class sizes.</b></p>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not sure/ No opinion
<p><b>Updated Curriculum:</b> It is recommended that each subject area update its curriculum on a regular basis to ensure we are utilizing current content and best teaching practices. In recent years, the District has had to reallocate funds from other budget areas to sustain the curriculum replacement cycle; however, this has impacted other areas of need. <b>The District would like to ensure there is funding to sustain the curriculum replacement cycle.</b></p>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not sure/ No opinion
<p><b>Course Offerings:</b> The high school offers College Now/AP (advanced placement) courses, allowing students to potentially receive college credit while in high school. Additionally, a variety of elective classes such as agriculture, art, business, computer science, music, physical education, technical education and world language are available to students. <b>The District would like to continue to offer relevant elective course offerings to students.</b></p>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not sure/ No opinion
<p><b>Career and Technical Education:</b> There is a growing demand for skilled professionals in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM). Our high school offers elective courses in Agriculture, Business and Marketing, Construction Trades, Art, Music, Health Science and Family and Consumer Science. In addition, introductory courses in Career and Technical Education are offered at the middle school. <b>The District would like to update the Career and Technical Education middle and high school curriculum, equipment and facilities.</b></p>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not sure/ No opinion
<p><b>Technology:</b> Technology is an integral piece of the District's curriculum and the teaching and learning taking place in our classrooms. The District previously funded a portion of the technology budget through a federal program called E-rate. This funding source has now been reduced. <b>The District would like to continue to utilize the latest technology in our classrooms.</b></p>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not sure/ No opinion
<p><b>Mental Health Services:</b> There is a growing need to support students' mental health needs. As a result, there is a need for additional staff and training. <b>The District would like to expand their mental health services.</b></p>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not sure/ No opinion
<p><b>Preschool/Childcare:</b> The District has heard from many members of the community that there is a need for additional childcare opportunities and expanded preschool programming. Offering and expanding these programs could improve kindergarten readiness for our students and better meet the needs of our District families. <b>The District would like to expand preschool programming and offer childcare services.</b></p>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not sure/ No opinion

**Comments/suggestions:**

## Facility Funding Background

Both school buildings are in need of an investment to update aging infrastructure, address code compliance issues and improve educational spaces. **We need to make a decision if and how to make an investment in our schools that will impact our District and students for decades.** The District has identified a number of potential building projects that cannot be funded within the annual budget. **If the public chooses to address these needs, the primary way to obtain funding is through a facility bond.**

## Facility Projects

The following projects have been identified for community feedback:

Would you support the following projects being included in a bond referendum?	
<b>Americans with Disabilities Act Updates</b> - Our high school needs to be updated to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) code compliance, including entrances, restrooms and areas with elevation changes. <i>Est. Cost: \$300,000</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<b>Art and Music Classrooms</b> – Existing space at the elementary school could be reconfigured to create dedicated art and music classrooms to increase instructional time in the arts. The high school music classrooms would be renovated with improved acoustics, increased flexible space and additional storage. <i>Est. Cost: \$735,000</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<b>Building Infrastructure</b> - While our schools have been well maintained, many of the major systems have exceeded their useful life, resulting in inefficiencies and ongoing costly maintenance and repairs. The heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and controls, tuck-pointing and casework need replacement. Regrading is needed around the secondary school to address water infiltration and moisture issues. <i>Est. Cost: \$5.23 million</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<b>Career and Technical Education Classrooms and Labs (Shop)</b> - The high school’s current Technical Education classrooms and labs are outdated and too small, limiting course offerings. The project would renovate and expand these spaces to better support offerings in Agriculture and Construction Trades (i.e. woods, welding, metals and electronics). In addition, the District’s Family and Consumer Science program continues to evolve and change to meet the demands of student interest as well as the community’s food service workforce. A greenhouse and professional culinary kitchen would also be added. <i>Est. Cost: \$2.1 million</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<b>Collaborative Learning Spaces</b> – Existing classrooms at both schools would be repurposed to create flexible learning spaces to allow teachers to better meet each student’s individual needs through personalized learning, small group instruction and student collaboration. <i>Est. Cost: \$1.5 million</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<b>Makerspace</b> – Repurposed space at both schools could create a hands-on, project-based learning lab to be used by all grade levels and the community education program. These spaces encourage students to design, experiment, build and invent as they engage in Science and Engineering curriculum. <i>Est. Cost: \$832,000</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<b>Preschool/Childcare</b> – Existing space could be reconfigured to accommodate expanding the District’s preschool program and creating a fee-based child care program. <i>Est. Cost: \$225,000</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<b>Safety and Security</b> - The safety of our students and staff is our top priority. There is a need to redesign the elementary school’s main entrance to route visitors through a regulated area before gaining access to students. <i>Est. Cost: \$450,000</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure

Comments/suggestions:

## Facility Projects Continued

<p><b>Science Classrooms</b> - The middle school does not have a classroom designed for science. In addition, the high school science classrooms are outdated and lack proper equipment. These classrooms need to be redesigned to allow for greater flexibility for project-based activities and better access to technology. The lab stations require updates to plumbing and cabinetry as well as modifications to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) code compliance. <i>Est. Cost: \$997,000</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<p><b>Special Education Classrooms</b> - The high school special education classrooms need to be updated and expanded to provide dedicated space for work and life skill training. <i>Est. Cost: \$313,000</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<p><b>Weight and Fitness Room</b> - The current high school weight and fitness room lacks adequate ventilation and is too small to meet current physical education and co-curricular training needs, requiring physical education teachers and coaches to regularly adjust their lessons and training schedules. <i>Est. Cost: \$408,000</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure

Comments/suggestions:

## Facility Bond Support

The cost to address all of the facility needs identified in the survey thus far is nearly \$13 million. We realize we may need to upgrade our schools in phases, based on the community's priorities and willingness to financially support the projects. The following table shows the tax impact for various bond referendum amounts. **The District would like to know your level of support should they consider a bond referendum in the future.**

PROPERTY TAX IMPACT					
Type of Property	Estimated Assessment Value	Bond Referendum Estimated Impact Per Year			
		\$7 million	\$9 million	\$11 million	\$13 million
<b>Residential Homestead</b>	\$75,000	\$13	\$20	\$26	\$33
	\$100,000	\$21	\$32	\$42	\$53
	\$150,000	\$37	\$56	\$74	\$93
	\$200,000	\$53	\$80	\$106	\$133
	\$250,000	\$69	\$104	\$138	\$173
<b>Commercial/ Industrial</b>	\$50,000	\$22	\$33	\$44	\$55
	\$100,000	\$44	\$66	\$88	\$110
	\$250,000	\$125	\$187	\$250	\$312
<b>Ag Homestead**</b> (average value per acre of land and buildings up to \$1,940,000)	\$3,000	\$0.27	\$0.40	\$0.53	\$0.66
	\$5,000	\$0.44	\$0.66	\$0.88	\$1.10
	\$7,000	\$0.62	\$0.92	\$1.23	\$1.54
<b>Ag Non-Homestead*</b> (average value per acre of land and buildings)	\$3,000	\$0.53	\$0.79	\$1.06	\$1.32
	\$5,000	\$0.89	\$1.32	\$1.76	\$2.20
	\$7,000	\$1.24	\$1.85	\$2.47	\$3.08

**\*Ag2School Property Tax Relief Bill: Estimated tax impact includes 40% reduction due to the School Building Bond Agricultural Credit. #Homestead examples exclude the house, garage and one acre, which has the same tax impact as a residential homestead.**

<p><b>How much of a tax impact would you support through a bond referendum, assuming the projects included were acceptable to you?</b></p> <p><i>Note: Tax impacts assume 20-year borrowing and an interest rate range of 4.25%-4.75%.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$13 million bond referendum <input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$11 million bond referendum <input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$9 million bond referendum <input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$7 million bond referendum <input type="checkbox"/> I would only support a smaller bond referendum <input type="checkbox"/> I would not support any bond referendum <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not sure/need more information
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Comments/suggestions:

## Additional Projects

The school is in need of a **space for large group instruction and student performances**. Currently, many of these events are held in the shared gym space, which lacks adequate sound and lighting systems. The gym's already busy schedule limits its instructional use during the school day as well as evening performances.

The **high school gym** is too small to meet the District's co-curricular program needs. The narrow gym causes safety concerns during competitions as the bleachers and score tables are extremely close to the court. The lack of gym space causes scheduling challenges, and requests for youth programming cannot always be accommodated.

The **school's wrestling/multi-purpose room and locker rooms** are located in the basement. The spaces are too small and lack proper ventilation. With only one access point and no elevator, there are safety and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) code compliance issues.

### Three options have been developed that could be funded by expanding the bond referendum:

**OPTION A:** Update the existing shared gym/performance space with improved acoustics, new bleachers and sound system, update the wrestling/multi-purpose and locker rooms and install elevator access to the lower level. This option does not increase space or alleviate scheduling challenges. *Estimated Cost: \$2.8 million*

**OPTION B:** Build a new 2-station gym, locker rooms and restrooms, convert the existing gym into a large group instruction/performing arts space and create flexible space for a wrestling/multi-purpose room. *Estimated Cost: \$9.1 million*

**OPTION C:** Build a new large group instruction/performing arts space with seating for 500. Renovate the existing gym and relocate locker rooms to the first floor. Update the wrestling/multi-purpose room and install elevator access to the lower level. *Estimated Cost: \$9.75 million*

Type of Property	Estimated Assessment Value	Bond Referendum Estimated Impact Per Year		
		OPTION A \$2.8 million	OPTION B \$9.1 million	OPTION C \$9.75 million
<b>Residential Homestead</b>	\$75,000	\$9	\$30	\$32
	\$100,000	\$15	\$48	\$51
	\$150,000	\$26	\$84	\$90
	\$200,000	\$37	\$120	\$128
	\$250,000	\$49	\$156	\$167
<b>Commercial/ Industrial</b>	\$50,000	\$15	\$50	\$53
	\$100,000	\$31	\$100	\$107
	\$250,000	\$88	\$282	\$302
<b>Ag Homestead</b> (average value per acre of land and buildings up to \$1,940,000)	\$3,000	\$0.19	\$0.60	\$0.64
	\$5,000	\$0.31	\$1.00	\$1.07
	\$7,000	\$0.43	\$1.39	\$1.49
<b>Ag Non-Homestead</b> (average value per acre of land and buildings)	\$3,000	\$0.37	\$1.19	\$1.28
	\$5,000	\$0.62	\$1.99	\$2.13
	\$7,000	\$0.87	\$2.79	\$2.98
<b>Please select ALL of the options that you would support:</b>  Please note: This is an <u>additional tax impact</u> beyond funding for the facility projects identified on page 5.		<input type="checkbox"/> OPTION A <input type="checkbox"/> OPTION B <input type="checkbox"/> OPTION C <input type="checkbox"/> I do <u>not</u> support any of the options <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not sure/need more information		

**Comments/suggestions:**

## Respondent Information

Please check your response to each of the following:

What is your age?     Under 18     18-25     26-34     35-54     55-64     65 and over

Is your primary residence in the NRHEG School District?     Yes     No

Are you an employee of the NRHEG School District?     Yes     No

Do you have children attending the District?     Yes     No

If you have school-aged children, what school(s) do they attend? (Mark all that apply)

- NRHEG Elementary                       NRHEG Secondary                       Public school outside of District  
 Homeschooled                               Virtual/online school                       Private/parochial school  
 Other

In which city or township do you reside?

- City of Ellendale                       City of Geneva                       City of Hartland  
 City of New Richland                       Wilton Township                       Otisco Township  
 Byron Township                       New Richland Township                       Somerset Township  
 Lemond Township                       Summit Township                       Berlin Township  
 Geneva Township                       Bath Township                       Freeborn Township  
 Hartland Township                       Do not live in the District

Do you own property in the NRHEG School District that is taxed as agricultural land?     Yes     No

## District Feedback

Please tell us how well you believe we are doing in each of the following areas:

Delivering a high-quality educational experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Great	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Developing student character	<input type="checkbox"/> Great	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Keeping the public informed	<input type="checkbox"/> Great	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Maintaining District facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Great	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Providing a welcoming and safe environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Great	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Providing opportunities for community input	<input type="checkbox"/> Great	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Retaining high-quality, motivated staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Great	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Spending tax dollars wisely	<input type="checkbox"/> Great	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
<b>Overall, how satisfied are you with the NRHEG School District?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Unsatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion

Comments/suggestions:

*Thank you for your participation. We sincerely value your time and input.*

**NRHEG Public Schools  
306 Ash Ave S  
New Richland, MN 56072**

**"CAR-RT SORT"  
Non-Profit Org.  
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Permit No. 1  
New Richland, MN**

**BOXHOLDER  
POSTAL CUSTOMER**

***Tour Our Schools and Learn More at an Open House***

**Tuesday, September 18, at the NRHEG Elementary School in Ellendale  
6:30 pm in the Media Center**

**Thursday, September 20, at the NRHEG Secondary School in New Richland  
6:30 pm in the Media Center**

If you have questions regarding the District's planning process,  
please call Superintendent Dale Carlson at 507-465-3205

***Please complete the survey before October 5, 2018.***

*This publication was produced for the residents of the NRHEG School District. Due to the overlap of postal routes, residents from neighboring school districts may receive this publication. Given the limitations of bulk mailing, this overlap was difficult to eliminate without significant cost. Thank you for your understanding.*