



INDEPENDENT  
SCHOOL  
DISTRICT 728

ELK RIVER | OTSEGO | ROGERS | ZIMMERMAN



[www.isd728.org](http://www.isd728.org)



*Our mission  
is to*

**EDUCATE, INSPIRE and EMPOWER**

our diverse learners, to **shape** their futures,  
to **accomplish** their dreams and to **contribute**  
positively to our local and global communities.



# Referendum 2019

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Title:	Superintendent
District Name:	Independent School District 728
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Title of Entry:	ISD 728: Strong Schools, Strong Communities
Entry Category:	Gold Medallion
Number of Communication Staff:	Four (4)
Size / Type of District:	13,500 Students / Public K-12

## Synopsis

ISD 728 is the eighth largest school district in Minnesota, located 35 miles northwest of Minneapolis. We proudly serve more than 13,500 neighborhood students and more than 50,000 total lifelong learners in all or parts of Albertville, Dayton, Elk River, Otsego, Ramsey, Rogers, St. Michael, Zimmerman and Nowthen, as well as the townships of Big Lake, Baldwin, Livonia, Orrock and Stanford in 10 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 3 high schools and 1 alternative high school.

In November of 2019, ISD 728 asked residents to approve an operating referendum totalling approximately \$223,000,000 (\$110,000,000 for operating AND a \$113,000,000 bond), which was the second-largest in Minnesota. More impressive and challenging was the fact that ISD 728 had asked residents to support 11 referendums and 19 questions in the last 20 years. Written differently, residents have been asked to support referendums every other year for the last 20 years.

The Strategic efforts involved thousands of residents over an 18 month period, and was directly based on community recommendations presented to the District through meetings and input from thousands of residents, which helped form the District's newest Strategic Plan. ([ISD 728 Strategic Plan](#)).

The result of this informational campaign was a successful referendum, strongly supported by residents of our ISD 728 communities. The funding will set the District's course for the next decade of learning through a consolidation of levies and a bevy of construction projects across the cities served by ISD 728.

## Summary

On November 5, 2019, residents of ISD 728 were asked whether to increase school funding through two referendum questions. The School Board unanimously approved holding a referendum after a year and a half of community input, research and planning.

**Question One**, if approved, would provide a \$750 per student increase and would generate approximately \$11 million per year, providing more predictable and stable funding, while maintaining support and resources for students throughout the district. The funds would be used for such things as:

- Supporting struggling students;
- Maintaining class sizes;
- Supporting student mental health;
- Updating curriculum and other classroom materials; and
- Improving career and technical programs for students;

The above mentioned priorities were determined from an 18 month strategic planning process involving thousands of community residents.

**Question Two**, if approved, would provide \$113,000,000 to:

- Build a middle school to address enrollment growth;
- Address building maintenance needs across ISD 728, such as roofs, HVAC systems and parking lots, to maintain the community's investment in our schools;
- Update indoor physical education and outdoor athletic facilities at all three traditional high schools to ensure they are equitable and adequate for students across the district; and
- Create more flexible learning spaces across the district and at all levels to support different student learning styles.

General strategies for the campaign included, but were not limited to:

- Providing clear and concise messages to all targeted audiences
- Reach and convenience 12,000 voters determined, from research, to be most likely to support referendum to get out and vote yes
- Establish a comprehensive website to serve as "THE" source for information to include such things as a FAQ, Rumor Has It, videos (What if), site specific information on how each school and community would be impacted, ways to communicate with the Board and Superintendent, opportunities to request presentations etc...

The Board approved the ballot question on June 24, 2020 and the election took place November 5. The information campaign began the first week in September.

The 2018-23 Strategic Plan ([728 Strategic Plan](#)) was developed with input from more than 1,000 parents and staff:

- Mission: educate, inspire and empower our diverse learners...
- Strategies:
  - Innovative environment
    - Career and college readiness
    - Continuous curriculum review
    - Expanded music, art, PE, world language E-12
    - Eliminate achievement gaps
    - Social-emotional skills
  - Equitable opportunities and access to programs and facilities
    - Safe spaces
    - Extra-curricular programs and facilities
    - Engaged community via variety of communication methods
    - Mental health services
    - Relevant technologies
    - Future ready students
    - Diverse, effective and engaged staff
- Core values:
  - ALL people have value.
  - Valuing and respecting differences strengthens the individual and the community.
  - People thrive when they feel connected, supported and affirmed.
  - Everyone can learn.
  - Hope inspires and empowers.
  - Lifelong learning is essential for personal growth.
  - Change is an opportunity for growth.

Once the community driven Strategic Plan was complete, the referendum campaign began. The process included three distinct phases:

### **PHASE I: November-June (set the stage)**

- Establish need:
  - [Community Survey Summaries \(Morris Leatherman\)](#)
  - [Demographer Study and Report \(Hazel Reinhardt\)](#)
- Tell our story
- Research
- Engage
- Plan

### **PHASE I Goals**

- Increase residents' awareness of key growth, facilities and funding issues.
- Build trust in the district's ability to manage finances.
- Reinforce the quality education provided by ISD 728.
- Remind the community of the extensive work put into the 2018-23 Strategic Plan and the resulting values/plans.
- Engage the community in options for addressing needs for their input and advice.

## PHASE I Message Framework

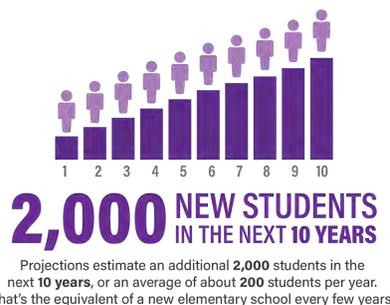
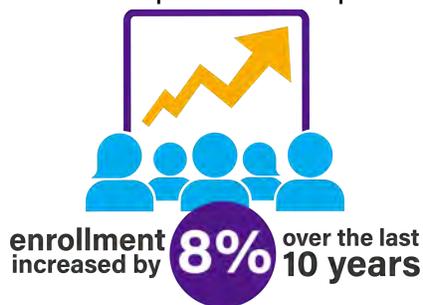
- Community-driven [Strategic Plan](#) is the foundation for our overall thoughtful planning process to ensure we have the resources to provide the most appropriate learning environments for kids (spaces, programs and materials).
- [Demographer's report](#) details both past and projected enrollment growth, putting a strain on our schools.
- [Community survey](#) indicates strong community support for the district in terms of educational quality, staff, academic programs, district leadership, financial management, student achievement levels – and the community's perceptions align with the Strategic Plan's values
- Residents value maintaining our schools and keeping curriculum updated - both of which are challenges given inadequate state funding not keeping pace with inflation or increasing costs, and special education reimbursements not keeping up with promises made at the state and federal levels.

## PHASE II: May-August (prepare [messages](#) and materials)

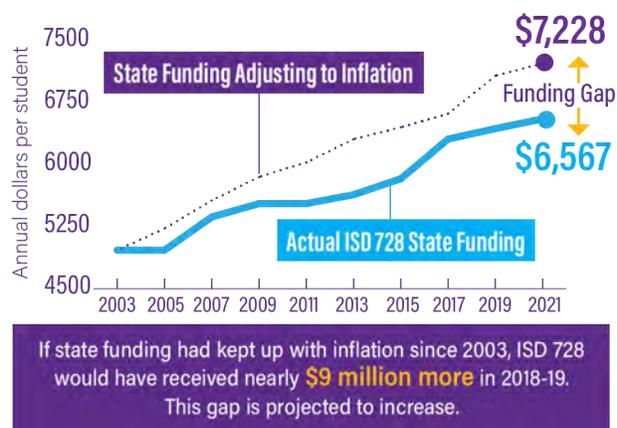
- Finalize request
- Approve referendum
- Prepare and produce all informational materials
- Establish site teams

## PHASE II Message Framework

- [Strong schools equal strong communities](#)
- Growth requires more space



- Special ed unfunded mandates putting pressure on operating budget - on top of cuts already made and inadequate state funding



### Continued pressure on the budget as a result of inadequate funding

We pay approximately \$10.5 million annually for unfunded mandates from our operating budget that **are not being reimbursed** from the State or Federal Government as promised.

**\$10.5 MILLION ANNUALLY** For Special Education, English Language Learners and Gifted and Talented Programs

- Protect investment in schools by doing deferred maintenance
- [We are good financial stewards](#)
- [Requests will support community developed Strategic Plan](#)
- [Improvements tied to student learning](#)
- [Community will benefit too \(use of facilities\)](#)

- With a bond we can do more to address all needs. Without bond, will still need to do some additions and DM - but residents will pay higher interest rates and we will be limited in what we can do

### **PHASE III: Sept-Nov (information campaign)**

- [Train and implement site team Communication Plan](#)
- Share information
  - [Fact Sheet](#)
  - [Sample Ballot](#)
  - [Bookmark Facts](#)
  - [How to Vote Flyer](#)
  - [Video - Overview](#)
  - [Video - What if it Passes?](#)
  - [Video - What if it Fails?](#)
  - [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
  - [Rumor Has It](#)
- [Vote](#)

### **PHASE III: Short Messages**

- If approved, funds would support educational programs, address building maintenance needs, create more flexible and equitable learning environments, and provide space for our growing enrollment.
- Q1 funds would support school materials, student support and academic programs. Q2 funds would address enrollment growth, deferred maintenance, flexible learning spaces and facility inequities.

Throughout the process, data was collected, including but not limited to:

- A Facilities Study (Equity and long term maintenance)
- An Enrollment Study
- [Community Survey Summaries \(Morris Leatherman\)](#)
- [Demographer Study and Report \(Hazel Reinhardt\)](#)
- A Tax Priority and Tolerance Study
- Post Campaign Evaluation Study

### **Major Challenges Included:**

- 11 elections in 20 years (19 questions)
- Equity across the school district
- Anti-Tax climate
- Vote No “Concerned Taxpayer” Group
- Operating funds were to maintain services

## Research

The entire campaign was based on research over a five year period, which included:

- A Facilities Study (Equity and long term maintenance)
- An Enrollment Study
- [Community Survey Summaries \(Morris Leatherman\)](#)
- [Demographer Study and Report \(Hazel Reinhardt\)](#)
- A Tax Priority and Tolerance Study
- Post Campaign Evaluation Study

The research began immediately after the 2014 Referendum, and continued through summer 2019. A combination of informal (community information / feedback sessions) as well as formal sessions (perception surveys, demographic study, community perception study, Tax priorities and tolerance, etc.) were held. This research and data collected determined the amount ([Sample Ballot](#)), and where funds would be used ([Fact Sheet](#)).

**Registered Voter Analysis** - Election data was evaluated to determine key demographics, historical successes (or failures), and what communication strategies were effective. What we learned is that voters wanted a long-term plan, did not want the District to ask for additional support every other year, and that an inflationary component had to be added, which had never been done before. We also learned that residents were very supportive of spending money toward maintenance related items (i.e. roofs, parking lots, and heating /cooling systems), maintaining / lowering classrooms, and mental health. Residents also confirmed that they recognized continued enrollment growth, that building an additional school was necessary, and that costs to build would not be cheaper five years from now.

Planning was also done to determine projected election turnout and the number needed for a simple majority vote. Staff attended workshops on referendum/bond election campaigns and were advised on an in-depth analysis of current registered voters and voter turnout, which led to the following conclusions:

- Registered voters: 45,000
- Estimated turnout percent: 35% = 15,750 voters on Nov 5
- Number of votes needed for 55%: 8663 ... goal is 9000 votes
- Number of resident K-12 parents: 9,300
- Number of resident staff: 1200 (out of 1750 total)

**Situational Analysis** - An in-depth situational analysis was conducted [Community Survey Summaries \(Morris Leatherman\)](#) and led to the following conclusions:

- Top Six Arguments Supporting a Referendum:
  - Need more space for 2,000 new students expected in ten years due to housing growth
  - Deferred maintenance is expected and necessary to protect investment in schools
  - Additional funding necessary to implement community developed Strategic Plan - innovative learning environments, equitable opportunities and access to programs and facilities

- Required special ed programs cost \$10.5M more than district receives, putting additional pressure on operating budget
- Important to invest to keep schools high quality, which increases property values
- District has cut over \$10M from its budget in past 6 years and plans to cut \$10.2M for next year; even with a state funding increase, additional cuts will be needed
- (decent support for: since HS athletic fields are used for many different sports, artificial turf is needed to maintain fields, improve safety and increase opportunities during different seasons; improving athletic facilities at high schools will not only benefit students, but will provide additional recreational spaces for the community to use)
- Top Four Arguments Opposing a Referendum:
  - Just approved a bond and levy increase five years ago - district shouldn't need more money so soon
  - Taxes are going up too quickly; can't afford more taxes on backs of homeowners
  - Funding for local schools is adequate; do a better job spending taxpayer's money
  - Too much emphasis on technology with no explanation of how it improves student learning

**Engagement Process** - An in depth engagement process was implemented which included but was not limited to:

- [Fact Sheet](#)
- [Sample Ballot](#)
- [Bookmark Facts](#)
- [How to Vote Flyer](#)
- [Video - Overview](#)
- [Video - What if it Passes?](#)
- [Video - What if it Fails?](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Rumor Has It](#)
- [3 Community Forums](#)
- [100+ Parent and Community Presentations](#)
- [Opportunities to request presentations](#)
- 40+ staff presentations (budget and referendum)
- [Site teams established at every school](#)
- 10+ meetings with youth associations and booster clubs
- Personal phone calls to more than 12,000 residents most likely to support a referendum
- [Social media campaigns](#)

Major conclusions from the engagement process included:

- Support for accommodating enrollment growth
- Desire for more mental health support
- Excitement for CTE programs and opportunities
- Concerns about including a field house, pool, and ice rink in the proposal
- Concerns about the amount of taxes and the potential increase

## Planning

The Board and District leadership worked with the communications team to create and execute a months-long communications plan. Work was done to utilize existing vehicles of communication, including print pieces, digital media, social media and in-person presentations.

A comprehensive communications plan was developed with input from cabinet members, the communications team and a consultant. This document guided staff throughout the months, weeks and days leading to the Nov. 5 vote, from initial surveys to print and website materials.

### ISD 728 Bond/Referendum Communications Plan

Staff was also engaged through a “site team process,” which started with an in-person meeting in September 2019. Groups from each of the District’s 20 buildings were placed with the task of rallying each “school community,” along with service centers, to inform and “get out the vote.”

A theme was created to rally the school community, including the hashtag #728Strong.

## Implementation / Communication

The Board and District implemented a series of eleven (11) public meetings between November 12, 2019 and June 2020 to plan for, discuss, and approve a referendum. Below is a timeline:

- November 12, 2019: Demographic Study review
- November 26, 2019: Review community survey results (perceptions, priorities, etc.)
- January 14, 2020: Capacity/Enrollment data review
- February 11, 2020: City presentations on development (new houses) and timelines
- February 25, 2020: Community recommendations related to Strategic Plan
- March 22, 2020: Budget and reduction discussions
- April 22, 2020: Review community survey results (taxes, tolerance, priorities, etc.)
- May 6, 2020: Referendum recommendation discussions
- May 20, 2020: Ballot language and community recommendation discussions
- June 6, 2020: District budget reductions and forecast
- June 24, 2020: Approve referendum and ballot language

Measurable objectives of communication included, but were not limited to:

- Developing plan parents/staff can support
- Utilize data to drive campaign and communications
- Create awareness with parents, staff, and those most impacted and/or who would benefit
- Minimize time spent on negative residents or those looking to “district” efforts
- Secure 9,000 yes votes
- Increase number of individuals voting absentee and early

The communications team worked collaboratively with site teams from every school, parent organizations, and youth associations to reinforce messages, secure votes, and ensure people had/made time to get out and vote.

## **Communication Tactics / Tools**

A variety of communication tools were used throughout the campaign. The overall strategy was to inundate those who were most likely to support the referendum, which included those experiencing crowded classrooms, parents of students in the school district, current and former staff, and those who had been active in the school district and community education programs. The communication plan identifies some of the tactics and messages.

A few highlights include:

- [Website content](#)
- [Mailing\(s\)](#)
- [Use of Social Media](#)
- [Use of Mass Communication System](#) (Parents)
- [Fact Sheet](#)
- [Sample Ballot](#)
- [Bookmark Facts](#)
- [How to Vote Flyer](#)
- [Video- Overview](#)
- [Video- What if it Passes?](#)
- [Video- What if it Fails?](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

## **Evaluation**

### **Election Results:**

Local voters approved both ISD 728 (Elk River, Rogers, Zimmerman) requests for increased school funding in the Tuesday, Nov. 5 election:

- Question 1 passed 56.5% yes to 43.5% no. The increase in the operating levy will be used to fund school materials, student support and academic programs: (unofficial results: 5,901 yes votes, 4,542 no votes). Examples of how the funding will be used include:
  - Supporting struggling students.
  - Maintaining class sizes.
  - Supporting student mental health.
  - Updating curriculum and other classroom materials.
  - Improving career and technical programs for students.
- Question 2 passed 62.7% yes to 37.3% no. The bond funding will help address enrollment growth, deferred maintenance needs, flexible learning spaces and facility inequities (unofficial results: 6,546 yes votes, 3,900 no votes). Funds will be used to:
  - Build a middle school to address enrollment growth.
  - Address deferred maintenance needs across ISD 728, such as roofs, HVAC systems and parking lots, to maintain the community's investment in our schools.

- Update indoor physical education and outdoor athletic facilities at all three traditional high schools to ensure they are equitable and adequate for students across the district.
- Create more flexible learning spaces across the district and at all levels to support different student learning styles.

Election results were an important part of the overall communication strategy. The Communication Team, as well as Cabinet met weekly to evaluate happenings, modify plans, and determine ways to be most successful. The communication team evaluated the number and type of social media messages, how many people were accessing specific resources, how many people were voting early, how successful individual school site teams were doing with implementing site plans, etc...

After the election, surveys were sent to parents, staff, board members, committee members and many more to review successes, things that could have been done better, and lessons learned. Overall conclusions included:

- 100% of parents were aware of the campaign, and how their child would benefit from the passage.
- Parents and staff understood what budget reductions would occur if the referendum failed.
- Respondents could recite talking points almost verbatim.
- The website, resources, and videos were extremely effective.
- Thirty four individuals, approximately half of which did not reside within the District and could not vote, were vocal on social media opposing taxes, encouraging others to vote no, and distributing misinformation.
- The “Vote Yes” group was extremely effective in providing factual information, and both the District and supporters were effective in not engaging those who adamantly opposed .
- All residents felt like the District was transparent, willing to answer any question, and 100% honest with what the referendum would and would not do.
- The referendum was based entirely on sustainability and what community members indicated they would support.

## **Construction, Building Improvement Plans**

- In January 2020, the District released plans in cooperation with construction partners and architects that will bring changes to multiple buildings and facilities throughout our ISD 728 communities. [A comprehensive website](#) was created to communicate these projects to our constituents and stakeholders.



# REFERENDUM PRESENTATIONS

## Strong Schools. Strong Communities.

On **November 5, 2019**, residents of ISD 728 will decide whether to increase school funding through two referendum questions. The School Board unanimously approved holding a referendum after a year and a half of community input, research and planning.

To get more information:

[www.isd728.org/728strong](http://www.isd728.org/728strong)



**Growing district –  
Great problem to have!**



**enrollment increased by 8% over the last 10 years**



## ISD 728 is a growing district – which is a great problem to have!



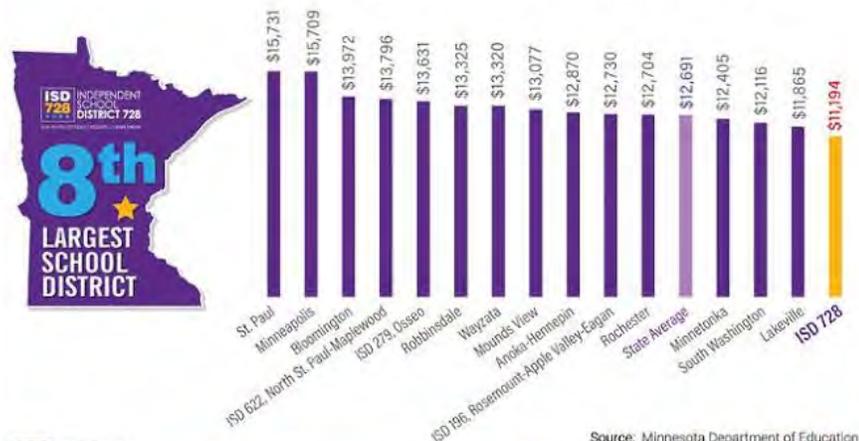
**2,300 NEW HOMES**  
IN THE NEXT 3 YEARS

More than **2,300** new single-family homes are expected to be built within our district in the next 3 years.



## How do we compare?

**Total Per Student General Fund Revenue**  
15 Largest Minnesota School Districts • 2017-2018



Source: Minnesota Department of Education





# VOTING MATERIAL



# VOTE EARLY!

**VOTE EARLY IN PERSON**  
 Sherburne County Government Center  
 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330  
 Monday through Friday (September 20-November 1) - 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
 Saturday, November 2 - 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
 Monday, November 4 - 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**VOTE EARLY BY MAIL**  
 Visit [www.isd728.org/AbsenteeBallot](http://www.isd728.org/AbsenteeBallot)  
 to download the application

**OR VOTE NOVEMBER 5**  
 Polls will be open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on November 5, 2019. Your polling location is based on your residence and may be different from previous elections. Visit [www.isd728.org/PollingPlace](http://www.isd728.org/PollingPlace) or call 763-765-4351 to find your exact polling location.

**LEARN MORE!** [www.isd728.org/728Strong](http://www.isd728.org/728Strong)

SIGNAGE AT ALL ISD 728 BUILDINGS

## LEGAL MAILING

**STRONG SCHOOLS VOTE NOV. 5 STRONG COMMUNITIES**

**NOTICE OF CHANGE OF POLLING PLACE LOCATION**  
 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 728 (ELK RIVER), STATE OF MINNESOTA

The all-poll site for the upcoming election will be moved from the current location to the new location on or before the date indicated below.

Current Polling Place	Proposed New Polling Place
Current Polling Place #1: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330	Proposed New Polling Place #1: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330
Current Polling Place #2: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330	Proposed New Polling Place #2: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330
Current Polling Place #3: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330	Proposed New Polling Place #3: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330
Current Polling Place #4: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330	Proposed New Polling Place #4: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330
Current Polling Place #5: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330	Proposed New Polling Place #5: 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330

**LEARN MORE**

Visit [www.isd728.org/728Strong](http://www.isd728.org/728Strong) or call 763-765-4351 for more information.

**ISD 728 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 728**  
 ELK RIVER, MINNESOTA

**REFERENDUM 2019**  
[www.isd728.org/728Strong](http://www.isd728.org/728Strong)

**STRONG SCHOOLS VOTE NOV. 5 STRONG COMMUNITIES**

STUDENT SUPPORT • CLASS SIZES • LEARNING SPACES  
 CLASSROOM MATERIALS • BUILDING REPAIRS

**STRONG SCHOOLS. STRONG COMMUNITIES.**

On November 5, 2019, residents of ISD 728 will decide whether to increase school funding through two referendum questions:

- Question 1: Funds to address high class sizes, school materials, student support and academic programs.
- Question 2: Funds to address enrollment growth, building maintenance needs, flexible learning spaces and facility inequities.

VOTE EARLY IN PERSON	VOTE EARLY BY MAIL	VOTE ON NOVEMBER 5!
<p><b>EARLY VOTING BEGINS SEPTEMBER 20, 2019</b></p> <p>You no longer need a special reason to vote absentee or to take advantage of early voting!</p> <p><b>Vote early at:</b></p> <p><b>SHERBURNE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER</b>                      13880 Business Center Drive NW                      Elk River, MN 55330                      763-765-4351</p> <p>Monday-Friday: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.                      Saturday, Nov. 2: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.                      Monday, Nov. 4: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.</p>	<p><b>REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION</b></p> <p>Call: 763-765-4351</p> <p>Visit: <a href="http://www.isd728.org/AbsenteeBallot">www.isd728.org/AbsenteeBallot</a> to download the application.</p> <p><b>RETURN BALLOT APPLICATION</b></p> <p><b>By mail:</b>                      Sherburne County Government Center                      Auditor/Treasurer Department                      13880 Business Center Drive NW                      Elk River, MN 55330</p> <p><b>By fax:</b>                      763-765-4400</p> <p><b>By email:</b>  <a href="mailto:elections@oc.sherburne.mn.us">elections@oc.sherburne.mn.us</a></p> <p>Once the county receives the application, the ballot materials will be mailed to you.</p> <p><b>RETURN BALLOT BY MAIL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will need a witness when you vote and complete your ballot. The witness can be either a registered Minnesota voter or a notary.</li> <li>Mail the ballot and forms back right away after you finish. Your ballot will not count if it is received after Election Day.</li> </ul>	<p><b>POLLS WILL BE OPEN 7 A.M. TO 8 P.M. ON NOVEMBER 5, 2019</b></p> <p>Your polling location is based on your residence and may be different from previous elections.</p> <p>For a list of polling locations visit <a href="http://www.isd728.org/PollingLocations">www.isd728.org/PollingLocations</a>.</p> <p>Visit <a href="http://www.isd728.org/PollingPlace">www.isd728.org/PollingPlace</a> or call 763-765-4351 to find your exact polling location.</p> <p><b>LEARN MORE!</b>                      Learn more about voting - including how to register - at <a href="http://www.mnvotes.org">www.mnvotes.org</a>.</p>

## VOTING INFO FLYER

**ISD 728 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 728**  
 ELK RIVER, MINNESOTA

**REFERENDUM 2019**  
**SAMPLE BALLOT**  
[www.isd728.org/728Strong](http://www.isd728.org/728Strong)

**STRONG SCHOOLS VOTE NOV. 5 STRONG COMMUNITIES**

STUDENT SUPPORT • CLASS SIZES • LEARNING SPACES  
 CLASSROOM MATERIALS • BUILDING REPAIRS

On November 5, 2019, residents of ISD 728 will vote whether to increase school funding to support the district's students and schools through two referendum questions. If approved, the funding would address classroom, budget and building needs across the district.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT QUESTION 1**  
**Revising Existing School District Referendum Revenue; Replacing With New Authorization**

The board of Independent School District No. 728 (Elk River), Minnesota has proposed to revoke all of the School District's existing referendum revenue authority, \$467.12 per pupil, and replace it with a new referendum revenue authorization of \$1,217.12 per pupil (an increase of \$750 per pupil), subject to an annual increase of the rate of inflation. The proposed referendum revenue authorization would be first levied in 2020 for taxes payable in 2020 and applicable to tax 100,000 gross sales, otherwise required to indicate as provided by law.

Should the revocation of the existing referendum authority and the replacement with a new referendum revenue authorization proposed by the board of Independent School District No. 728 (Elk River), Minnesota be approved?

YES  NO

BY VOTING "YES" ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.

The majority of Minnesota school districts rely on locally approved operating levies to help fund their schools.

If approved by voters, the tax impact on the average homeowner would be less than \$45 per month.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT QUESTION 2**  
**Approval of School District General Obligation School Building Bond Issue**

If School District Question 1 is approved, shall the board of Independent School District No. 728 (Elk River), Minnesota be authorized to issue general obligation school building bonds, in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$113,000,000 for acquisition and betterment of school sites and facilities, including but not limited to: deferred capital projects, school security, and repairs and/or building systems, including the district's existing school buildings, parking lots and existing systems, construction of a new school, and improvements to schools at all levels?

YES  NO

BY VOTING "YES" ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.

School districts must pass voter approval for building and maintain their schools.

If approved by voters, the tax impact on the average homeowner would be less than \$7 per month. If both questions are approved, the district will not increase other taxes - bringing the combined tax impact down to less than \$52 per month.

## SAMPLE BALLOT

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Should the revocation of the existing referendum authority and the replacement with a new referendum revenue authorization proposed by the board of Independent School District No. 728 (Elk River), Minnesota be approved?

YES  NO

BY VOTING "YES" ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.

The majority of Minnesota school districts rely on locally approved operating levies to help fund their schools.

If approved by voters, the tax impact on the average homeowner would be less than \$45 per month.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT QUESTION 2**  
**Approval of School District General Obligation School Building Bond Issue**

If School District Question 1 is approved, shall the board of Independent School District No. 728 (Elk River), Minnesota be authorized to issue general obligation school building bonds, in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$113,000,000 for acquisition and betterment of school sites and facilities, including but not limited to: deferred capital projects, school security, and repairs and/or building systems, including the district's existing school buildings, parking lots and existing systems, construction of a new school, and improvements to schools at all levels?

YES  NO

BY VOTING "YES" ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.

School districts must pass voter approval for building and maintain their schools.

If approved by voters, the tax impact on the average homeowner would be less than \$7 per month. If both questions are approved, the district will not increase other taxes - bringing the combined tax impact down to less than \$52 per month.

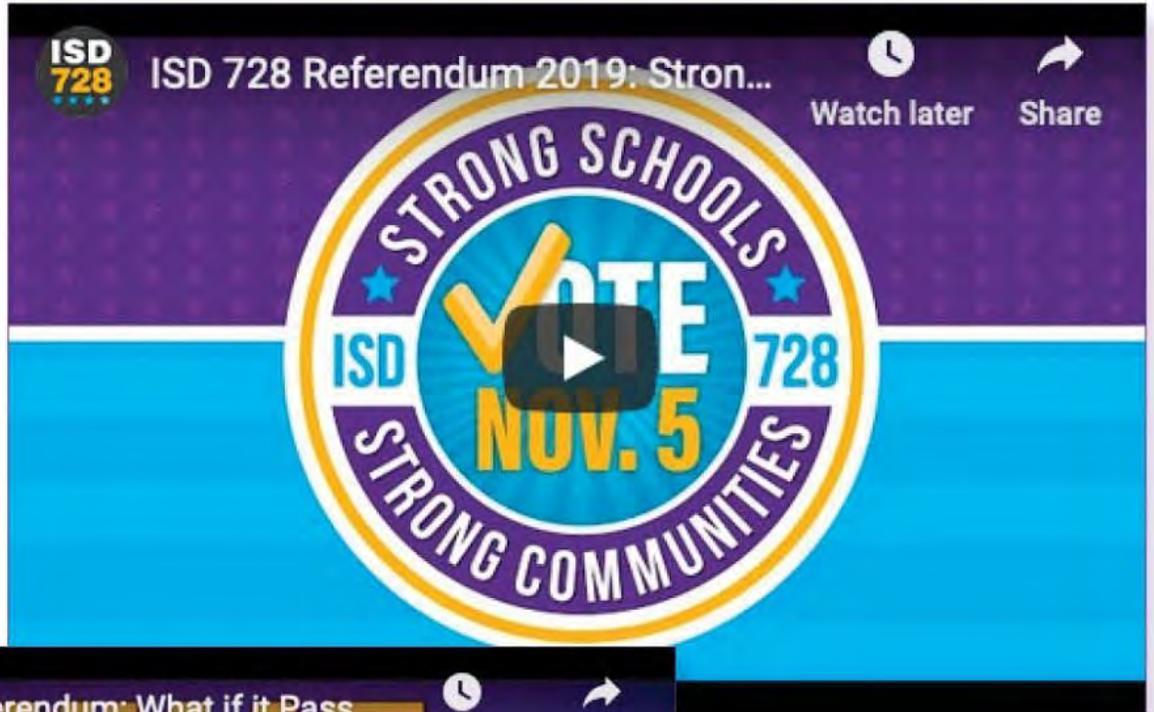
**LEARN MORE**  
 Learn more about voting - including how to register - at [www.mnvotes.org](http://www.mnvotes.org)

**LEARN MORE AND VOTE NOVEMBER 5, 2019**

Visit [www.isd728.org/728strong](http://www.isd728.org/728strong) | Email [728strong@isd728.org](mailto:728strong@isd728.org) | Call 763.274.6277 | Find Us On Social Media



# VIDEOS





# SOCIAL MEDIA

Our FIRST referendum InfoSession is TOMORROW NIGHT in ROGERS. See you at 7 p.m. in the MEDIA CENTER. We will be at ZHS Thursday - same time, also in the school's media center.

Looking forward to discussing the important facets of this referendum with our residents!!! #728Strong

**ISD 728 INDEPENDENT DISTRICT 728**  
**REFERENDUM 2019**  
**COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS**

*Free Events* *Open to the Public*

**YOU'RE INVITED**  
 Join ISD 728 Superintendent Dan Bittman for a conversation about the upcoming **2019 Referendum**.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT:**

- Why the school district is requesting more funding.
- What each community/school would receive if voters approve the questions.
- What would happen if the referendum does not pass.
- Answers to any questions you have.

ISD 728

Published by Mike Schoemer [?] · October 29, 2019 ·

posting our "What if both questions pass?" video last week, you  
 us ... "Well, what if the community votes 'No'?"  
 couple of minutes and check out this video! You ask - we  
 red.



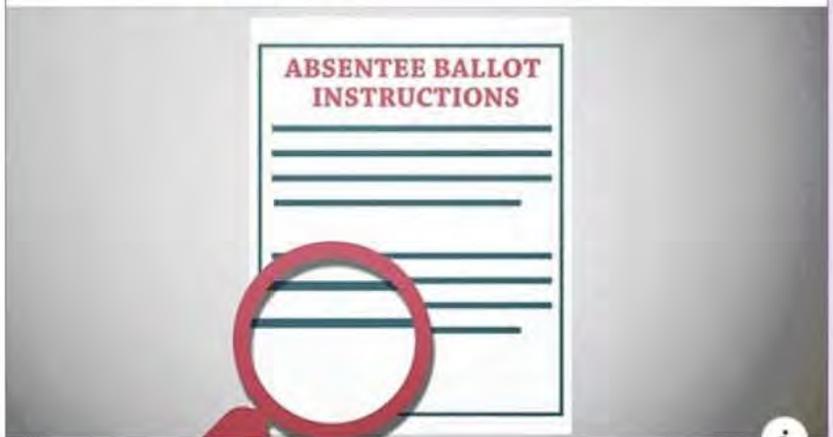
YOUTUBE.COM



ISD 728

Published by Mike Schoemer [?] · October 14, 2019 ·

Still have questions about Early Voting? Check out this video from the State of Minnesota #728Strong



YOUTUBE.COM

**Vote Early — Vote Absentee! | Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State**

ISD 728

Published by Mike Schoemer [?] · November 5, 2019 ·

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS:

Question 1 PASSED 56.5 percent to 43.5 percent

Question 2 PASSED 62.7 percent to 37.3 percent

THANK YOU VOTERS!!!

**STRONG SCHOOLS STRONG COMMUNITIES**  
**THANK YOU!**  
**WE DID IT!**  
**THANK YOU FOR VOTING!**

15,198  
 People Reached

4,479  
 Engagements

Boost Post

432

14 Comments 45 Shares



# WEBSITE

## Yes and Yes: Voters support both ISD 728 funding requests

Local voters approved both ISD 728 (Elk River, Rogers, Zimmerman) requests for increased school funding in the Tuesday, Nov. 5 election:

Question 1 passed 56.5% yes to 43.5% no. The increase in the operating levy will be used to fund school materials, student support and academic programs: (unofficial results: 5,901 yes votes, 4,542 no votes). Examples of how the funding will be used include:

- Supporting struggling students.
- Maintaining class sizes.
- Supporting student mental health.
- Updating curriculum and other classroom materials.
- Improving career and technical programs for students.

Question 2 passed 62.7% yes to 37.3% no. The bond funding will help address enrollment growth, deferred maintenance needs, flexible learning spaces and facility inequities (unofficial results: 6,546 yes votes, 3,900 no votes). Funds will be used to:

- Build a middle school to address enrollment growth.
- Address deferred maintenance needs across ISD 728, such as roofs, HVAC systems and parking lots, to maintain the community's investment in our schools.
- Update indoor physical education and outdoor athletic facilities at all three traditional high schools to ensure they are equitable and adequate for students across the district.
- Create more flexible learning spaces across the district and at all levels to support different student learning styles.

### Quick Links

- Construction Updates
- Overview
- Voting Information
- Referendum Materials
- Process Timeline
- Information Sessions
- Tax Impact
- FAQ
- Submit a Rumor
- Voting Results

### Learn More!

- Email: 728strong@isd728.org
- Call: 763-274-6277

## Referendum Materials

### Print

- FACT SHEET
- SAMPLE BALLOT
- BOOKMARK
- HOW TO VOTE FLYER

### Videos



### Learn More!

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## Frequently Asked Questions

Expand All

- What are the two (2) referendum questions about?
- What does it mean that Question 2 is "contingent" on Question 1?
- What is the difference between a bond and a levy?
- Why is ISD 728 seeking a school funding request on a November 2019 ballot?
- Who can vote on the referendum?
- I heard the District is having the election this year and not on the General Election because they do not want everyone to vote, is that true?
- If the referendum passes, will ISD 728 continue to ask voters for more money every couple...

### Learn More!

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## Voting Information



Polls will be open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on **November 5, 2019**. Your polling location is based on your residence and may be different from previous elections. For a list of polling locations [click here](#).

Visit [www.isd728.org/PollingPlace](http://www.isd728.org/PollingPlace) or call 763-765-4351 to find your polling location.

**Absentee and early voting begins September 20, 2019:** You no longer need a special reason to vote absentee or to take advantage of early voting.

[View the Sample Ballot »](#)



### Vote Early In Person

You can vote early starting September 20, 2019 at:

**Sherburne County Government Center**  
13880 Business Center Drive NW  
Elk River, MN 55330  
763-765-4351

Monday through Friday - 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday, November 2 - 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Monday, November 4 - 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



### Where do I Vote?



### Learn More!

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- Call: 763-274-6277
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