

Dear residents of the DeKalb School District:

In order to solve severe overcrowding at elementary schools and DeKalb High School, as well as to address anticipated overcrowding at the middle school level within a few years, the DeKalb School Board has placed a \$110 million referendum on the Feb. 5 primary election ballot. The mayors and other community leaders of the three communities we serve have worked very hard to ensure that future residential growth in our area will result in funds that will help offset the investment needed as a result of such growth. However, the district is asking voters to consider a plan to begin work on five projects that will alleviate pressing capacity issues that currently exist in every school building in the district.

The result of community participation is a plan that was unanimously approved by our school board in early December to place a referendum question on the Feb. 5 ballot as the first phase of the comprehensive solution. The board is resolute in its support of the plan to remedy capacity needs. We are also proud of the work provided by dedicated members of our community who served for nearly two years on the Facilities Planning Committee and the Citizens Finance Advisory Committee.

The plan has five components: 1) building a new high school to accommodate 2,500 students (with core facilities for 3,000 students), 2) building a new elementary school on the east side of the district, 3) reusing (repurposing) the current high school, with modest renovations, as a middle school, 4) reusing (repurposing) the current Huntley Middle School as an elementary school, and 5) reusing (repurposing) the current Chesebro Elementary School as a district early childhood/pre-kindergarten center.

The district has placed a considerable amount of information in the referendum section on its Web site, including a tax impact calculator for both homeowners and agribusiness landowners. The Web site can be found at <http://www.dist428.org> and also provides a list of answers to frequently asked questions. A homeowner can enter the market value of his or her home to find the impact of a successful referendum.

Hundreds of community residents have worked diligently to bring forward a comprehensive, cost-effective, long-term solution. We hope that residents have received information needed to make a decision on Feb. 5.

THE DEKALB SCHOOL BOARD