



Why realigning the school district is good for all of us.

This fall, residents of ISD 2142 will cast votes on whether or not to consolidate schools. In effect, the voters' decision could determine if the school district remains in operation or dissolves.

That's because with declining enrollment, inefficient buildings, higher operating costs and many other financial concerns, the district can no longer afford to operate all our buildings. For years the district has made cuts and sacrifices to delay this step, but unfortunately we've run out of Band-Aid solutions.

The Budget Reality

This past school year's (2008-2009) adopted budget shortfall was around \$1.5 million. Without adoption of the proposed plan, the projected shortfall would be near \$4.1 million for budget year 2011-2012, which would place the district into statutory operating debt. In effect, the district would have to go out of business without a solution such as this one.

The Good News for Kids is...

- **They continue attending school in this district** – By supporting the realignment, we're ensuring our young people continue to attend school in the St. Louis County School District. But if the bond referendum fails, our kids could be split up and sent to schools in various neighboring districts.
- **They benefit from modern learning environments** – By finally being able to attend upgraded and conveniently-located schools, our kids will be able to enjoy modern classroom technologies and the quality learning opportunities they need and deserve in the 21st century.
- **They enjoy more extra-curricular activities** – By keeping our district in operation, and thus keeping more schools open, our children will have more opportunities to perform in bands, participate in student government, play on sports teams and so on.

The Good News for Adults is...

- **Our taxes remain among the lowest** – District taxes are currently among the lowest in Northeastern Minnesota, and if the community approves the plan, your tax burden will continue to be in the lower 25 percent of the 19 neighboring districts. But if voters do not vote in support of the plan and the district has to dissolve, all residents – whether you have kids in our school system or not – will likely pay the school tax of the nearest school district.
- **Efficiencies are greatly enhanced** – By restructuring, the district will be reducing 26 percent of its operational cost expenditures and 22 percent of its staffing cost, allowing the district to more efficiently use its most valuable resource: teachers.

“Small Schools with Big Opportunities – Where Everybody is Somebody”

How the St. Louis County School District realignment will look:

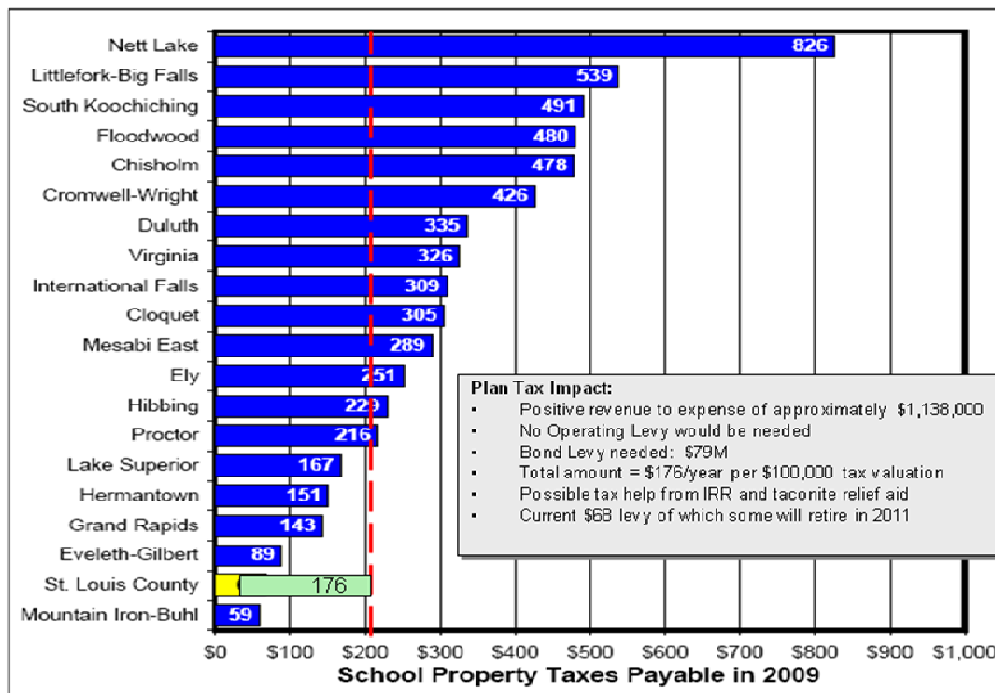
- Closing the AlBrook and Cotton schools and constructing a new school near the center of an area that would serve the Albarn-Brookston-Cotton-Meadowlands attendance areas.
- Remodeling of the Cherry School which will now serve the Cherry-North Cotton-Makinen attendance areas.
- Closing Cook and Orr schools and constructing a new school near the Hwy #53 and Hwy #73 junction that will serve both attendance areas, as well as some of the Tower-Soudan attendance area.
- Remodeling the Babbitt and Tower schools. Babbitt would remain a PK-12 school and Tower would become a PK-6 school with the potential Charter secondary school at this site. This would allow high school students the choice of attending school in Babbitt, or at a charter school, or at the new school between Cook and Orr.

Tax Comparison to Other School Districts

If a decision is made to dissolve the school district, you'll be impacted – even if you don't have students in the public schools. You'll then be paying the taxes of the nearest district. Right now, our taxes – at \$68 for a \$100,000 home – are significantly lower than they are in neighboring districts. To learn more, log on to www.isd2142.k12.mn.us.

St. Louis County School District No. 2142

Total School Taxes, Payable 2009, on a \$100,000 Home*



* The above figures do not include the impact of the homestead credit, which will decrease the school portion of property taxes by varying amounts.