



## HAWLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ISD 150 COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING SUMMARY

August 22, 2022

### THE PROCESS

- Hawley Public Schools currently operates 3 buildings with a population of roughly 1,015 students. This number increased to 1,053 for our current school year (FY23). A refurbished district-owned church houses Pre-K students, Hawley Elementary houses grades K-6 and Hawley High School, grades 7-12.
- Over the last 10 years the district has been experiencing significant growth, specifically in grades Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> and in 2014, added a 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade wing to the current Elementary school to address this development.
- Although the addition alleviated growth concerns at the time, the district has continued to see an increase in the elementary student population, which is expected to filter through the upper grade levels. Kindergarten, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades currently operates 4 sections while 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade operates 5 sections, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade at 3 sections.
- Recognizing the need to accommodate more students not only at the elementary, but also the Middle and High School levels, the Hawley School Board in October 2021, officially selected a consulting firm to lead the district through a comprehensive process to both identify needs and better understand how to “right-size” the district for the future.
- The assessment phase of this 4-step process was conducted over a 4-month period and analyzed the educational adequacy of existing spaces, the current physical conditions of district facilities and past and future student population. Administrators, students, teachers and staff were surveyed and asked about their current spaces.
- In addition to assessing building challenges, the board also realized that understanding academic needs were equally as important for planning and simultaneously began working through a strategic planning process to assist the district in identifying a long-term academic vision for serving its stakeholders.
- Both the comprehensive assessment and academic vision were used to set a direction for the district as options were considered for a potential November 2022 ***bond referendum***.
- On May 25, 2022, the district hosted a community engagement meeting to share the comprehensive process and preliminary project options with the community. The district solicited feedback and names of those interested in joining a Planning Task Force. Additional feedback was also solicited via a Community Scientific Survey conducted during the months of June and July.
- The community task force formed met with the district on June 21st, July 12th, August 3rd and August 8th to discuss assessment findings, preliminary options and financial scenarios. The objective of the task force was to assist the district in determining a final plan that is supported by the community.
- Given the assessment data and Community Scientific Survey results, the task force on August 8th recommended to the Hawley School Board to move forward with the construction of a new Middle School. Improvements will also be made to both the Elementary and High School.
- On August 8th the School Board voted unanimously to move forward with the construction of new Middle School and approved a Review and Comment to be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education on August 10th.
- On August 22nd the Hawley School board unanimously passed a resolution for a November 8th 2-question ballot with question 1 being the construction of a new Middle School with improvements to both the Elementary and High School and question 2 for improvements to the existing High School gyms and Dale Skallerud Athletic Complex.

### **Bond Referenda Elections**

***Bond Referenda*** provide districts dollars to make improvements to facilities and building infrastructure only. For example, bonds can be used for major construction such as renovation, building an addition, building new schools or for general building projects such as addressing deferred maintenance and ventilation deficiencies. Bonds however, cannot be used to hire teachers, buy textbooks, or for the operation of the district such as utilities.



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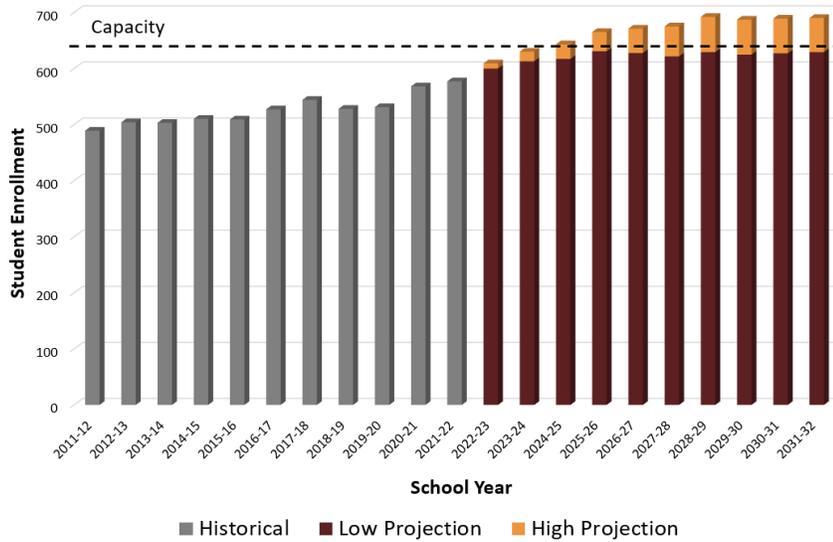
August 22, 2022

## ENROLLMENT

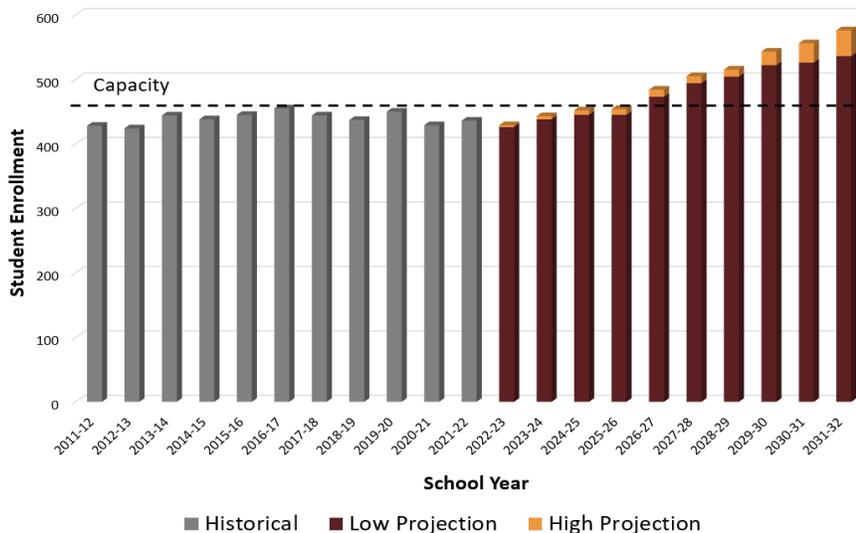
The district's enrollment study showed that in five years (2026-27) K-6 enrollment is projected to be 45 to 99 students **larger** than in 2021-22 and Middle School/High School enrollment will **increase** 37 to 48 students from 2021-22; however, enrollment will continue to increase between 2026-27 (5 years) and 2031-32 (10 years).

In ten years, Hawley Public Schools' enrollment (excluding Early Childhood) is projected to increase ranging from 1,165 to 1,266 or **15% to 25% percent more** than the 2021-22 enrollment of 1,013 students.

**Hawley Elementary School**  
*Capacity Concerns*



**Hawley High School**  
*Capacity Concerns*





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### MAJOR NEEDS IDENTIFIED

- The Elementary is at capacity, with spaces being used as classrooms that were not designed for that use. All spaces are currently being used and there is no room for growth unless class sizes are increased.
- The High School is nearing capacity and will be over capacity within a few years as larger elementary class sizes move to higher grades, unless class sizes are increased.
- Elementary academic support spaces are undersized and housed in rooms not designed for that purpose.
- The Preschool is housed in a former church. It was not designed for educational purposes and limits enrollment.
- Neither the Elementary or High School have small group/breakout learning spaces.
- Storage is inadequate at all facilities.
- The High School does not have a secured double entry and the District Office is undersized.
- The buildings have been well maintained but do have some deferred maintenance needs including:
  - Building exterior upgrades including tuckpointing, joint sealants, some window and roofing replacements.
  - Fire Alarm system and clock system replacements.
  - Minor mechanical system replacements.
  - Track is in need of replacement.
  - Concrete sidewalk repairs.
  - Interior finish upgrades – Science Casework upgrades, wallpaper upgrades, flooring replacements, door frame and hardware upgrades, new wall-mounted basketball hoops.

### FINANCIAL:

- Baird Financial, the district's financial advisors are using an average home value of \$180,000 and average value per acre of \$4,000.
- The legislature successfully passed legislation in the 2019 session to increase the **Ag2School Credit** for agricultural property from 40% to 70%, in a phased approach: 50% for Payable 2020 (2019 -2020 school year), 55% for Payable 2021, 60% for Payable 2022 and 70% in Payable 2023. This is permanent law and a tax credit.
- An **Ag2School Credit** increase to 85% from 70% was proposed in the tax bill of the current legislative session for Payable 2024. Although an agreement was made on a tax bill, it has yet to be signed into law.
- In the event of an election, Baird will calculate, as requested, individual tax impacts for agricultural property owners as the values vary greatly.
- Baird will also calculate final tax impacts once a project plan is adopted by the district.

**Please refer to provided Baird Financial tax charts for reference.**