

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

**We All Make Home Repairs...
Now It's Time for School Repairs
Please Vote on or before Nov. 5.**



A Message from Daniel Kreidermacher, School Board Director

As a homeowner, I expect to make major repairs and improvements to my home every few years – windows, doors, brick, a new furnace, new paint, flooring, even kitchen cabinets as they wear out. The same is true for our schools.

The high school was built in 1966 and the elementary school in 1975. And 1996 was the last time voters approved a bond referendum to fund building improvements. That's 28 years since voters have supported we make major facility improvements to our schools.

Our maintenance staff has done good work. School boards and administrators have done their best to maintain our schools using limited district funds, and the Health and Safety Levy. However, it is simply not enough. Our schools have facility needs that far outpace our annual long-term facility maintenance dollars.

Both schools need:

- Secure entries to ensure student and staff safety.
- Separate bus and parent drop-off areas to ensure student safety.
- Significant maintenance, repairs, and improvements – brick repair, windows, plumbing, HVAC, doors/door hardware, and restrooms.

At the elementary school, classroom casework and wall upgrades are needed to address sound issues. The elementary school also needs larger kindergarten classrooms and new playground equipment. The high school needs major classroom improvements in Science, Art, and Shop/Agriculture/Career Technical Education. Many of these spaces have not been updated since I was a student. And I am a proud graduate of the Class of 1996. The high school gyms are used for instruction daily and athletic and community events at night and on weekends. They need Main Gym flooring replacement, new C-Gym bleachers, and new locker rooms with working showers.

While L-A Public Schools delivers a quality education with these facility challenges (I have seen it first-hand for my own children – one currently attending the high school and one a recent graduate), these improvements will strengthen the foundation for learning.

The school board has unanimously agreed to ask voters to consider a \$19.95 million Bond for Buildings referendum in the Nov. 5 General Election. This proposal is \$19 million less than last year. If you are a farmer, like me, please get to know the Ag2School credit – it provides a 70 percent tax break on the cost of school construction debt, and 62 percent of the L-A residents qualify.

This bond referendum addresses the highest needs. It is based on more than six months of consistent communications to all residents, right sizing of the school district budget, and actively engaging in community conversations to gather input and feedback.

As a community, we are Cardinal Strong. It is time to update our schools so they too can be Cardinal Strong.

Levy for Learning. Bond for Buildings. Learn more at www.lewalt.k12.mn.us