

March 17, 2026

Chamber Perspective Statement:

To: The Little Falls School Board and Community Stakeholders

The Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce has been following the district's long-term facility planning process with a focus on how potential changes may impact our local economy, tax base, and future workforce.

As a nonpartisan business organization, the Chamber does not take positions on ballot measures or political decisions. Our role is to provide a business and economic perspective for our members and the broader community.

Given the potential long-term impact of facility decisions on the business climate and workforce pipeline, the Chamber is providing this perspective to contribute a business and economic perspective to the broader community conversation. We have organized our observations into three key areas: business considerations, workforce development, and community and economic development.

Business Standpoint

From a business standpoint, the district's consideration of reducing its overall facility footprint by approximately 142,600 square feet reflects an approach intended to align infrastructure with current and projected enrollment trends. Operating multiple facilities with significant overhead costs introduces long-term financial considerations that can influence the broader community, including taxpayers and employers. Consolidation scenarios may present opportunities for more efficient use of public resources over time, depending on implementation and long-term outcomes.

The condition of the High School's infrastructure is an important consideration in discussions about maintaining a significant community asset. With mechanical systems that are more than 50 years old and increasing maintenance demands, the district faces decisions around repair versus replacement. Decisions around timing and approach to these systems may influence future maintenance costs, including the potential for emergency repairs.

Workforce Development

From a workforce perspective, the quality and functionality of educational facilities are one of many factors that contribute to preparing students for future careers. Learning environments that support modern instruction, technical education, and extracurricular engagement can help students build the skills that employers increasingly look for, including collaboration, problem-solving, and adaptability. Changes to educational environments may influence the strength and readiness of the local talent pipeline over time.

Community and Economic Development

From an economic development perspective, the condition and functionality of school facilities can play a role in community competitiveness. Updated learning environments and expanded activity spaces may influence better student experiences and may also create opportunities to host regional events, youth activities, and community gatherings that contribute to local business activity.

The Chamber recognizes that facility decisions involve trade-offs, including financial considerations and differing community perspectives.

Overall, the Chamber recognizes that facility planning involves balancing educational needs, financial stewardship, and long-term community impact. These considerations are important to the continued vitality of Little Falls as a place to live, work, and do business.

In keeping with our nonpartisan role, the Chamber is not advocating for or against the referendum, but instead providing a business-focused perspective on how these types of decisions may impact the businesses and the broader community over time.

The Little Falls Area Chamber and Tourism.