

# VOTE YES ON MAY 6

## Help support a new gym for Southwest Parke Schools

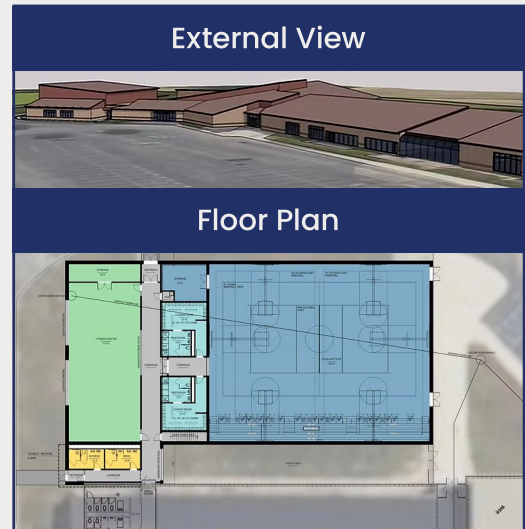
### Why Do We Need a New Gym?

Our students, teachers, and administrators have identified a desperate need for additional gym space. **The current facilities are insufficient** to accommodate academic activities, sports, and events. A new gym will offer a flexible space to address these challenges, including a dedicated wrestling team space at Riverton Parke and the proper facilities for uninterrupted testing and academic teams to compete.



### Want More Information?

Scan the QR Code or visit [panthersforprogress.com](http://panthersforprogress.com) to learn more.



### Locations for voting on May 6th will be:

- Collom's General Store, Bridgeton
- Montezuma Community Center, Montezuma
- Lyford Volunteer Firehouse, Lyford
- Rosedale Civic Center, Rosedale

**Absentee voting** (similar to early voting) will be **available beginning Monday, April 28th and ending Monday, May 5th**, and include Saturdays on April 26th and May 3rd. Times for absentee voting are below.

- Monday through Friday 8:00 - 4:00
- Saturday, April 26 & Saturday, May 3 8:00 - 4:00
- Monday, May 5 8:00 - Noon

**All in-person absentee voting occurs at the basement of the courthouse.**

### Testimonials:

"As a dedicated educator at Riverton Parke, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of physical activity on our students' overall well-being and academic performance. The addition of a gymnasium to our school would not only enhance our physical education curriculum but also provide a crucial space for students to engage in healthy activities, promote teamwork, and develop lifelong fitness habits.

Physical education plays a vital role in fostering discipline, focus, and resilience among students. An additional gym facility would allow us to offer a wider range of activities such as career fairs, ISTEP testing, FFA competitions, Math Bowls, Spell Bowls, and wellness programs without canceling PE classes to hold these events during school. This would not only benefit our current students but also attract prospective families who value a holistic educational approach." **Riverton Parke PE Teacher**

"When my son has basketball practice at Rosedale, he must take the bus home to Montezuma first, then my wife or I drive him back for 6 p.m. practice, waiting until it ends. This leads to long drives across the county, late nights, and less sleep. A new facility would allow kids to practice right after school, reducing excessive travel for parents and getting students home earlier on school nights." **Grant Mitchell, Montezuma**

## Will the new facility cause my taxes to rise by 14%?

No. The tax rate will stay virtually unchanged as a result of this project. This is possible because the school district will be paying off other debt before the new debt for the gym will start.

## The referendum question says that taxes will increase 14%. Is this correct?

This is misleading. The state dictates language for referendum questions and the calculations that go into it. The 14% actually represents the portion of the total Corporation tax rate that the new bonds (for the gym) would account for. Again, the net impact to the tax rate due to this project will be 0%. (Like paying off a car and then buying a new one with the same payment).

## Will the new multi-purpose facility cost \$10mm?

This is misleading. The maximum for the bond process was set at \$10MM for budgeting purposes, however the School Board has stated on multiple occasions that they will be considering a project budget more like \$7.5MM.

## Will this project disproportionately hurt the farmers in the district?

While it's true that farmers make up a large portion of the tax base in our ag-heavy district, it is the state that decides how to tax property and fund schools, not the school district. The school district sets the tax rate, which will not change much due to this project. Plus, property taxes for farmers are 100% tax deductible on their Schedule F of their income tax return.

## If the project is not done, won't my taxes go down?

Not necessarily. Just because the school district lets the tax rate drop that doesn't mean that taxes will go down because another taxing unit could come in and use the extra "capacity" that was given up by the school.

## Does Riverton Parke offer an Advance Physical Condition (APC) class?

No, due to space limitations, RP is the only school in a 40-mile radius that does not offer this class. In fact, Riverton Parke student athletes arrive at 6:00am to train and condition for all sports. Adding this new facility would eliminate the need for parents and students to drive to school at 5:30am.

## Will the new exercise facility be open to the public?

Yes, the plan is to include public access.

## Is it true RP Students do standardized testing in the cafeteria?

Yes, RP lacks space that can be used for standardized testing that is free from distractions. Testing in the cafeteria means students are distracted by the office and other students walking through. All students in the SWP District can use the additional space of an auxiliary gym to hold academic events, special programs, and create additional clubs to accommodate all students love for learning.

## Testimonials:

"As a parent and youth coach, I've personally rented space in Clinton—upwards of \$1200 —so young athletes can practice without conflicts with school sports teams, cheerleading, band, theater, and other activities. While costly, it ensures consistency for families. A new school facility would eliminate this expense and provide students with a dedicated, reliable space to train and grow." **Josh Helton, Lyford.**

"As a student and an athlete at Riverton Parke, I can say that having an Auxiliary Gym would be a huge benefit. During my time at RP, I have had multiple practices at Montezuma, RP, and Rosedale. It becomes very inconvenient for the athletes and their parents to juggle the inconsistent schedule of gym times and locations. Also, many times when I did have practice at RP, we have had to split the gym with other sports or teams, and this just doesn't work very well. Sometimes practices are even cut short so other teams are allowed gym time, and there have been times I have even had to practice in the hallways. It wouldn't just benefit athletes but all students. RP doesn't have any kind of multi-purpose room for test taking, job fairs, contests, or those types of activities, and an Auxiliary Gym would be perfect for that kind of thing and is very much needed!" **RP Student**