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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Farmington Area School District voters approve two school funding questions – increased operating levy and building bonds

FARMINGTON, MINN., November 4, 2015 – Farmington Area School District voters approved two school funding requests on the November 3 ballot:

- Q1: Increase the district's operating levy by \$433 per pupil, approved 57% yes (2,334 votes) to 43% no (1,777 votes). Funding will be used to lower class sizes and maintain educational programs.
- Q2: Provide \$45,320,000 in building bonds, approved 58% yes (2,395 votes) to 42% no (1,717 votes). Funding will be used to improve safety and security systems at all schools, address deferred maintenance needs districtwide (roof repairs, heating/cooling systems, outdoor facilities, parking lots) and add Kindergarten classrooms at all elementary schools.

Both questions take advantage of state aid to lessen the burden on local taxpayers: the state will cover more than one-third of the operating levy increase (Q1) and nearly ten percent of the bond (Q2).

"We are so grateful to our community for their support of our students, our staff and our schools," said School Board Chair Julie Singewald. "We spent months reviewing district finances, facilities maintenance needs and funding options before asking voters to provide funding where the state has not."

Budget planning for 2016-17 will begin in spring, and will incorporate the use of the increased operating levy to lower class sizes and maintain programs. Design plans will begin this winter for the roof repairs and replacements, security improvements and kindergarten classrooms. Construction schedules will then be established for that work as well as the deferred maintenance, with an effort to minimize disruption to students.

"This was our first funding request of voters in eight years," said Superintendent Jay Haugen. "We will continue to be responsible stewards of our community's tax dollars and will be transparent in how these funds are used. Thank you, Farmington!"

More information can be found at www.farmington.k12.mn.us/referendum.

Farmington Area Public Schools serve more than 6,900 students and 35,000 residents with K-12, Community Education and Special Education programs. The mission of Farmington Area Public Schools is to ensure each student reaches his or her highest aspirations while embracing responsibility to community. For more information please visit www.farmington.k12.mn.us or contact Sally McConnaughey at (651)463-5079, smcconnaughey@farmington.k12.mn.us.

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