



Our **STORY**

Once a rivalry, then a partnership, now, we are **FIERCELY UNITED.**

Rock Ridge Public Schools was born out of a community-wide mission to provide our students a world class education in 21st century facilities.

This mission involved two years of discussions, over 200 community meetings throughout Eveleth, Gilbert and Virginia, numerous joint school board meetings, and funding pledged from the State of Minnesota and Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation. In May 2019, the people of Eveleth, Gilbert and Virginia voted and passed a \$178 million referendum for an educational collaborative project - a combined 7-12 high school career academy and two new elementary schools - one in Eveleth and one in Virginia.

With a new high school on the horizon, a new identity was essential. Community, staff, and students' creative and thoughtful input led to the reveal of the new school name, mascot, and colors before a large, anticipatory crowd at the Eveleth Hippodrome, January 2020. Rock Ridge, the school name, recognizes the rock development on which the new schools are built, while Wolverines are known as "devil bears," a blend of the Blue Devils and Golden Bears mascots of both former school districts. The color green is a combination of the blue and yellow of Virginia and Eveleth-Gilbert.

The mission continued with a desire to not just collaborate as neighboring districts, but to become one. In May 2020, the communities again voted and successfully approved consolidating into Rock Ridge Public Schools.

We honor the history of these three communities and two school districts that brought us to this place in time. Now, we look to the future as **Rock Ridge Public Schools!**



PIERCELY UNITED



LAURENTIAN ELEMENTARY

- Start Date: Fall 2019
- Original Cost: \$34,000,000
- No Scope Creep
- Completion Date: Spring 2022

**BUILT ON TIME
BUILT ON BUDGET**



ROCK RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

- Start Date: Fall 2019
- Original Cost: \$114,500,000
- No Scope Creep
- Completion Date: Winter 2023

**BUILT ON TIME
BUILT ON BUDGET**



NORTH STAR ELEMENTARY

- Start Date: Fall 2022
- Original Cost: \$29,592,071
- Cost at the time of bidding: **\$36,893,786**
- Increase caused by COVID inflation: **\$7,301,715**
- No Scope Creep
- Completion Date: Winter 2024

WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

- Moved all demolition money into the North Star Elementary budget.
- Old buildings will remain standing and unused.
- Left old, empty, boarded-up building standing next to the new North Star Elementary.
- Took away all grass spaces from the kids.
- Took away 90% of outdoor play space from the kids.
- Borrowed money (\$4.7 million) to finish North Star Elementary.

SUMMARY

- Bids came in over \$7 million higher.
- The referendum by the voters passed pre-pandemic, in 2019.
- Inflation, material shortages, and COVID related costs pushed the price higher.
- We cut out grass spaces, outdoor play spaces, and halted demolition of the old buildings to help mitigate the cost increases.
- The resources we seek from the Legislature will help close the gap and finalize the original plan.