



Monona Grove School District

"Promoting Excellence for Global Opportunities"

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Understanding All Aspects of Long Range Facilities Planning

Monona, WI – The Monona Grove School District's Long Range Facilities Planning Committee met on March 3, 2015, to continue their assessment of the District's facilities. The focus of this meeting was to ensure that the committee fully understands the many aspects of operating a school district, school finance, and maintenance and their impact on the MGSD buildings. This background knowledge will help as the committee creates a master plan for the future of the district's facilities. Additionally, the meeting included a tour of Taylor Prairie School. Taylor Prairie is an elementary school where children attend four-year-old kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade. The school focuses on social and emotional learning and academic readiness. Principal Connie Haessly led the committee on the tour and discussed the school building's strengths and limitations including limited space for expansion, storage, safety and security and parking congestion.

Jerrud Rossing, the Monona Grove School District Director of Business Services, gave a presentation on student enrollment and on school finance. District enrollment in September 2014 was 3,285 students from grades 4K-12. This was an increase from 3,195 students in September 2013. Enrollment is determined not only for school finance and the annual budget but also to plan the instructional program and school building needs. Rossing offered an overview of school finance in the state of Wisconsin and how that affects the Monona Grove School District. More specifically, money for the District is generated through four major sources: State Aid, Property Taxes, Federal Aid, and Local Sources such as student fees, gifts and grants. These financial and operational aspects will shape the decisions made by the Long Range Facilities Planning Committee throughout the planning process.

Next, Mark Scullion, the District's Facilities Coordinator, discussed how the annual capital maintenance needs are addressed. Specifically, 5-year plans are created to accomplish the maintenance needed at each school; however the plans are also updated each year to accommodate urgent or unanticipated repairs that may arise at the schools. As part of the maintenance presentation, a representative from McKinstry also provided an energy efficiency overview of sustainable projects completed from 2009 until present through Act 32 Energy Exemption Funding. These projects were addressed to ensure occupant comfort, improve systems efficiency, reduce facility operational costs and ultimately optimize the life of the buildings. Examples of projects include: lighting upgrades, temperature control improvements, water conservation, and generator upgrades.

At the Tuesday night meeting, several members volunteered to serve on a subcommittee to assess the value and usage of land and properties owned by the School District. The Committee Chairperson, Dean Bowles, also asked for volunteers to work with District education committees in two areas: (a) elementary grade level configuration, and (b) athletic and recreational facilities. Their findings will be brought back to the main committee and included in their work and final recommendations.

Finally, all schools and facilities in the Monona Grove School District will be toured and evaluated by the committee in the next few months to create a plan for growth, quality and equity in facilities district-wide. For more information regarding the facility planning process, please go to www.mononagrove.org.

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