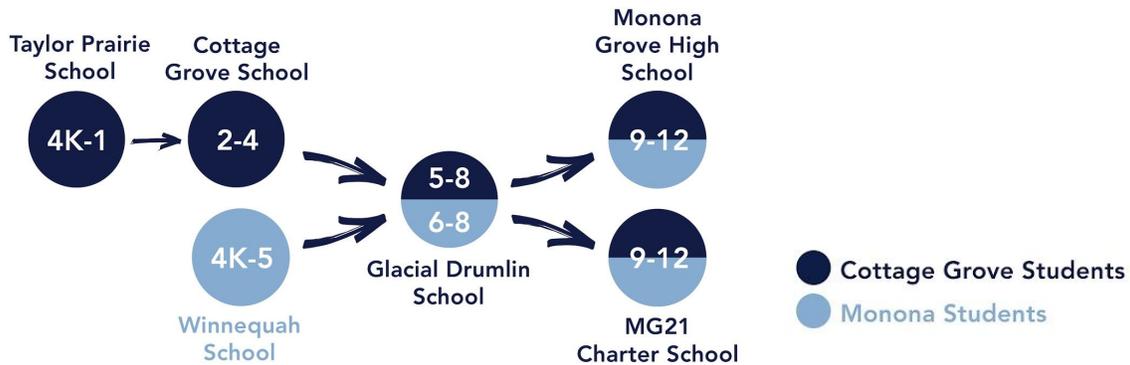




## Elementary Education in Monona Grove School District

One of the goals of the facilities plan coming before voters on November 6 is getting Cottage Grove 5th graders out of Glacial Drumlin School. Today in the Monona Grove School District, the makeup of the buildings looks like this:



If the referendum is approved, all 5th graders District-wide will attend an elementary school and GDS will be a true middle school for all District students. Why is that important?

Research has shown that the longer students remain in an elementary setting, the better they do and the higher they achieve. Elementary students generally have a core classroom, a homeroom, with a single teacher who knows the student well. This leads teachers and students to form bonds with each other, and allows students to forge deep connections with their peers. This all leads to a strong sense of classroom community. Fifth grade is a developmentally appropriate time for students to flex their leadership muscles. At this age and in this context, leadership often equates to age in relation to others in the building. So when 5th graders are the oldest in the building, those skills develop and flourish. When fifth graders are on the low rung of the ladder, so to speak, leadership tends to be more difficult.

While being best developmentally for the children in our community, this configuration also has the added benefit of logistical and effectual improvements for our District. Making GDS a true middle school means the building will no longer be at capacity, which leads to less pressure in core areas (gymnasium, cafeteria) and gives us the needed space to accommodate future growth. It also means that for Cottage Grove fifth graders and their teachers, planning, grading and scheduling will be consistent with their peers in Monona (Winnequah School).

If you'd like to learn more about the studies referred to above, please contact Katy Byrnes Kaiser at (608) 316-1960.

MONONA GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

**BUILDING TOGETHER. FORWARD TOGETHER.**