

Recommendations from the Ad Hoc School Naming Committee

Recommendation 1: Grade-level identifiers

Given the strong support on the community survey (82.6%), and in an effort to reduce confusion to new residents, new families, or visitors; the School Naming Committee unanimously recommends adding grade-level identifiers to all schools in the district. The committee researched and discussed several options given the grade configurations our district has in place. Recommendations are included in schobelow.

Recommendation 2: School names

Current Name	Recommended Name	Rationale
Glacial Drumlin School	Monona Grove Middle School	When this school opened, it held Cottage Grove 5th and 6th graders, as well as all 7th and 8th graders. When the new school opens, this school will be a true middle school. As middle school is the first time students from our communities are combined, a name that reflects and welcomes both communities will have a unifying effect. This name will also act as a bridge for students and families as they prepare to enter Monona Grove High School. The committee unanimously recommends this change.
(New school)	Granite Ridge Intermediate School	This name is a nod to our state rock and the elevations of the new school site. In the community survey, Granite Ridge received the highest vote tally (27.3%). While our committee reached consensus on this

		recommendation, it was not unanimous. More information is below under "other names considered."
Cottage Grove School	Woodside Primary School	The majority of survey respondents supported changing the name, and given the amount of confusion from residents and visitors about this name, the committee unanimously recommends changing the name. Given the proximity to the district's school forest, the committee unanimously recommends Woodside.
Taylor Prairie School	Taylor Prairie Early Learning Center	The committee unanimously recommends this name.

Recommendation 3: Winnequah School

The committee heard a compelling presentation regarding the history of the word "Winnequah." The presentation included detailed research and a productive discussion on the racist origins of the word Winnequah. Though there is no direct evidence of the word's creation, authorship or meaning, several published historical books found at the Monona Public Library explain it in the same way--a portmanteau of the words "Winnebago" and "Squaw." The [Wikipedia page on the word Squaw](#) has many sources explaining the racist origins of this word as does this [Teaching Tolerance article](#). Squaw is not a native word, it was created by colonizers. The word "Winnebago" is not the way that the indigenous people living in this area referred to themselves. From "City of Monona: Its Heritage and Landmarks" by the 2011 Monona Landmarks Commission: "The Ho-Chunk, called Winnebagos by the white people, are the most recent Indian inhabitants of the area, having evolved from the Woodland Culture."

In addition, the committee believes the mission of the Monona Grove School District and its focus on equity and social responsibility calls the Board to action on the name change. Despite decades of educational reform and federal mandates, the United States continues to see growing inequities among students. The administration and staff of the Monona Grove School District have been working for several years to disrupt the systems in place that allow these inequities to persist in our own schools.

We call upon the School Board to address this immediately. The committee unanimously recommends the School Board change the name to Monona Elementary School. Should the School Board not take this recommendation, the committee unanimously recommends the Board immediately create another ad hoc committee to do further review.

Notes and Discussion

The committee considered several options that we would like to share with you.

Naming by municipality

The committee discussed and considered naming all schools for their municipality rather than for a geographical or other feature. For example, Cottage Grove Early Learning Center, Cottage Grove Primary, Cottage Grove Intermediate, Monona Elementary. While we did not reach consensus on this option being the recommendation, many members of the committee felt this would be simpler, would unify our communities and district, and would clarify questions about who attends what schools.

Other names considered

The survey asking our community to weigh in on favored names had over 1,200 respondents. However, the committee understands the School Board may diverge from the committee's recommendation, and we want to offer you some insight into other names we considered for the new school.

Glacial Drumlin Intermediate School: The committee discussed transferring this name to the new school. The history of the "Glacial Drumlin" in Cottage Grove is significant. As the 5th grade moves out of the middle school building and into the new school, the name follows them, and creates the connection to the community. The committee did not reach consensus on this name. While several committee members felt it could honor the existing name and the significance of the drumlin, other members felt that transferring a name would diminish the excitement of opening a new school and could hamper efforts to create a unique culture among the staff and students.

Sandhill Ridge Intermediate School: Sandhill Cranes are a common and welcome, even cherished, sight in Cottage Grove and in that area of the Village in particular. The use of "ridge" is not only a nod to the topography of the site, but also would serve to distinguish this school from another school with a related name in the county.