



2017 - 2018

# Annual Report

October 2018

Monona Grove School District 5301 Monona Drive Monona, WI 53716

<i>Strategic Plan 2016-2020</i> .....	2
<i>Innovation Exploration</i> .....	3
<i>Strategic Plan Goals and Progress</i> .....	4
<i>Advanced Placement Courses</i> .....	5
<i>2017-2018 Budget Overview</i> .....	6
<i>MG21: Looking Forward</i> .....	7
<i>Building Together. Forward Together</i> .....	8

"Promoting Excellence  
for Global Opportunities"



Message from the  
Superintendent

## MG Pride!



Daniel Olson

As superintendent of Monona Grove schools, I have the great fortune of seeing all of the exciting, inspiring, and meaningful activities occurring in each of our schools day in and day out. Teachers and staff are committed to

All of the stories and information you will read on the following pages are shining examples of this work—but they are just that, examples. I encourage you to learn more about the many programs, explorations, connections that take place in every building, every grade level, every classroom in our District that are not highlighted here.

student achievement and excellence in academics, and to providing culturally responsive teaching to our diverse learners.

Our students are guiding, encouraging, and mentoring one another. Our community is committed to providing the best resources available to prepare our students for the future. Everyone at the Monona Grove School District is grateful to be partners in this work with you!

**"Everyone in the Monona Grove School District is grateful to be partners in this work with you."**

While our work is never done and we continue to have goals to improve, I am

proud of each and every teacher, staff member, and student in this District and I hope after reading through this report, you are too.

Sincerely,  
Daniel W. Olson, EdD  
Superintendent





# MONONA GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Promoting Excellence for Global Opportunities

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020

In July 2016, the Board of Education approved the Strategic Plan of the Monona Grove School District. The plan includes five focus areas.

### VISION:

MGSD is a student-focused culture that empowers continuous learners to embrace global opportunities and excellence.

### MISSION:

The mission of the MGSD is to enhance achievement for all students by cultivating a desire for learning and instilling social responsibility.

We will achieve this by...

- Building positive relationships among students, staff, parents, and community.
- Working together to inspire and engage students in meaningful learning opportunities by using research-based practices to address individual academic and social/emotional needs.
- Providing a safe and healthy environment that fosters respect and culturally responsive practices.
- Attracting, retaining, and developing a diverse, high-quality staff.
- Using resources efficiently and effectively.



### TEACHING AND LEARNING

- **Implement a high quality instructional service delivery model** – All students will succeed in reaching rigorous learning standards because of teachers' use of an integrated and comprehensive service delivery model.
- **Leverage technology to enhance teaching and learning** – Students will be positively impacted and achieve at higher levels due to effective use of technology in teaching and learning, using the SAMR and Triple E models to guide integration.
- **Deliver and expand a continuum of services for social and emotional learning** – Students will develop the personal qualities and life skills needed to successfully navigate their world and schools will proactively respond to all students' social and emotional needs in order to facilitate healthy relationships, increase academic achievement, and decrease problem behaviors.



### GUARANTEE EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITY, ACCESS AND OUTCOMES

- **Build capacity** – Staff will recognize and effectively respond to personal, implicit, and systemic biases and barriers that limit access and opportunities in order to ensure an equitable learning environment and school community for all students and families.



### HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PERSONNEL

- **Recruit and retain diverse and effective personnel** – The district will develop and implement systematic methods to recruit and retain diverse and highly effective personnel, enabling the district to achieve its mission.
- **Develop and engage all personnel** – Personnel will engage in professional development opportunities, offered and supported by the district, allowing personnel to contribute in meaningful ways to students and their learning.



### ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

- **Implement strategies to ensure effective and timely communication with stakeholders** – The district and its stakeholders will engage regularly in responsive and ongoing two-way communication so that students, families, district employees, and the community are united with common goals and purpose.



### FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND EFFICIENCY

- **Plan for financial sustainability and communicating needs and progress** – The district will develop a transparent and sustainable financial plan that supports the district's goals and is understandable to all stakeholders.
- **Heighten efficiency** – The district will increase operational efficiency in order to enhance the overall financial sustainability of the district.

### PROGRESS MONITORING

Annually, the overarching goals of the Strategic Plan will be reviewed. One-year SMART\* Goals will include action plans with benchmarks for progress monitoring, arranged into three cycles ending December, March, and June. Progress on goals will be reported to the Board of Education after each cycle.

\*SMART stands for specific, measurable, actionable, reasonable and time-specific.

"The Monona Grove School District has continually challenged our three children with extracurricular activities, music/band options, foreign language choices, honors classes, and AP classes. From kindergarten through 12th grade, we have had the pleasure of witnessing our children being taught by caring and professional educators who took the extra time to get to know each of our children. Overall, my grade for the MGSD is an A+!"

– Todd D., Parent



## Innovation Exploration

Our district has a proud tradition of excellence in all our schools, and our teachers and staff are innovators. We want to continually challenge ourselves to explore and improve and try new research-based ideas. To that end, MGSD offers incentives for teachers who develop “innovation explorations” from which ideas can be examined, developed, and broadly implemented if found to be successful. Here are just a few examples.

Teachers Sara Steine, Alison Wojta, and Lisa Sutter wondered if a teaching partnership--so that each teacher could know content more deeply, differentiate more effectively, apply UDL

options more readily--would engage students in more rich and meaningful opportunities. As their study evolved, new and different benefits were discovered. This innovation exploration became equally about content specialization as student/teacher relationship building.

Teachers Wendy Connor and Jordy Reinhart proposed studying whether allowing teachers to follow their passions (specialization of reading and math and co-teaching integrated, cross-curricular content) would result in students who were more apt to become empowered learners. Interdisciplinary approaches help students make connections between concepts and deepen their learning. This exploration is underway in the 2018-19 school year.

Could adding coding curriculum at the early elementary level strengthen students abilities as problem solvers and mathematicians? That is the question put forward by Library Media Specialist Casey Ineichen and teachers Charity Hanssen, Megan Reed, Jenny Fonner, and Paula Gray. This exploration emphasizes student ability to create and demonstrate knowledge, not simply consume knowledge. With positive results in 2017-18, this exploration is set for wider implementation in 2018-19.

Students crave purpose and connections and voice in their learning; if these pieces are present, will students be more engaged, learn more, and learn more deeply? Teacher Leah Rae Rusu looked for evidence that project-based learning increases the opportunities for application of learning for students. Focusing on collaboration and community issues, this exploration took students where their interests propelled them.

They began with observations and lessons on improving natural habitats of birds and wildlife in the area around their school which eventually led to stormwater and municipal water treatment lessons. An artist group from Dane county partnered with the stormwater education mentors to help the students design and paint a storm drain mural at their school to help teach people about keeping the water clean.



# Strategic Plan Goals and Progress

In the Monona Grove School District, more than 300 classroom teachers across six schools engage 3500 students in learning opportunities. These teachers may teach at different grade levels or teach different content areas, but they are united by our district mission: All students will succeed in reaching rigorous learning standards because of our teachers' use of an integrated and comprehensive service delivery model.

In MGSD, our service delivery model (how teaching and learning occurs) is based on an integrated and comprehensive approach, which means that teams of educators, rather than one teacher alone, work together to meet student needs whether those be academic, social-emotional, or other. Our team approach means that more educators know each student better and that creating successful learning environments is our collective responsibility, not that of one individual teacher alone.

## Youth Frontiers

The Monona Grove School District partnered with Youth Frontiers to offer two retreats for District students. These retreats focus on a core value: District fourth graders participated in a Kindness Retreat, while seventh graders engaged in the Courage Retreat. Each of the sessions were facilitated by Monona Grove High School students.



The kindness retreat is a day focused on developing empathy, promoting kindness and preventing bullying. The courage retreat aims to inspire students to follow their hearts, use courage and make responsible decisions. While the elementary and middle school students were empowered to include others and be responsible, our high school students had the opportunity to develop their leadership skills.

The goals for the kindness retreat were 1) understand why and how to make kind choices; 2) understand how words and actions affect others; and 3) acquire conflict-resolution skills to safely respond to situations of bullying. For the courage retreat, the goals were 1) identify personal fears and understand that everyone has them; 2) commit to acting with courage to make your school a better place; 3) deepen relationships with classmates to break down social barriers. According to Youth Frontiers, retreat participants develop the confidence to help a classmate.



### **Academic Indicators from Statewide Standardized Testing:**

Three data points that we specifically monitor are 3rd grade ELA/Reading Forward/DLM exam, 8th grade mathematics Forward/DLM exam, and 11th grade ACT composite results. These points are used by Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction for calculation of school report cards as well.

For 2017-18, our 3rd grade results in ELA/Reading show 55.30% of students are at a proficient or advanced level. For comparison, statewide the results for 3rd graders is 40.90%. Our 8th grade results in mathematics show 40.80% of students are at a proficient or advanced level. Statewide, the result for 8th graders proficient or advanced in math is 37.30%.

For 11th grade students, the ACT composite score is 22.2 compared to a statewide composite score of 19.8. In 2017-18, 37% of 11th grade students met the College Readiness Benchmark in all four areas: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. This was an increase from 32% the previous year. We are pleased that we continue to exceed statewide results, yet our main goal is to continually be better tomorrow than we are today.



### **Continued Implementation of Mental Health and Wellness Plan**

Monona Grove School District continues to engage in proactive efforts to address student needs so that students feel safe and that they are able to form healthy relationships

The MGSD Mental Health Workgroup identified four priority goal areas for the 2017-18 school year using the WI Mental Health Needs Assessment. The priorities were development of a leadership team structure, expansion of a social-emotion screening process, professional development related to Trauma Sensitive Schools and proactive staff self-care. All four areas are now rated as "In Place" or "Partially in Place." Some highlights include the expansion of a social-emotional universal screening process to the secondary level, and the development of a series of Trauma Sensitive Schools professional development modules that were delivered to educators district-wide. Staff feedback was resoundingly positive and we look forward to continuing this work.



### **Guarantee Equitable Opportunity, Access and Outcomes**

Staff will recognize and effectively respond to personal, implicit, and systemic biases and barriers that limit access and opportunities in order to ensure an equitable learning environment and school community for all students and families

Staff from all schools participated in training related to PBIS, Restorative Practices and other equity-related professional development including the National Integrated Comprehensive Systems for Equity Institute. Throughout the district, faculty and administration continue to build their understanding of and their skills in confronting inequity in our system. Regular review of school-level data tied to behavior indicated some improvement in suspension rates for Black students and a reduction in the percentage of students participating in alternative schools, programs and/or schedules. Removing barriers to student learning remains a constant focus of all district work for every district employee.

*"When moving to Wisconsin five years ago, it was vital that we found a community where the school district had a proven track record of academic, athletic, and fine arts excellence. The Monona Grove School District has delivered on our expectations. We are grateful to the teachers and staff and know that our boys are getting a top-notch education that will prepare them for a successful future."*

– Cecily B., Parent

# Students are Embracing the Challenge of Advanced Placement Courses

Advanced Placement (AP) classes offer high school students the opportunity to experience college-level expectations, content, and assessment while still receiving support and attention on a more personal level from high school teachers. Over the past three years, MGHS has added new AP course offerings: Biology, Chemistry, and Music Theory. We are pleased to share that in 2017-2018, there were 271 students who took 605 exams, and of those 605 exams, 363 had scores of 3 or higher. A score of 3 or higher on an AP exam is eligible for college credit. Since 2014, AP participation has increased by 125 students, almost doubling the enrollment in AP classes in just five years. At MGHS, the most popular AP course is Psychology, but US History and English Language and Composition aren't far behind!

“The teachers and staff in the Monona Grove School District have gotten to know my children, nurtured their strengths and interests and fostered their growth. I’m happy to send my children to a school that considers the whole child.”  
– Kate O., Parent

## Academic Testing Results

The results of our district-wide academic programming should always be students who feel engaged, capable, and prepared. Serving our students well is our highest priority and we take pride in our ability to offer strong academic programming that meets our students' needs on many levels. The district monitors and adjusts programming to ensure that this important work of preparing students well continues to be done effectively.

Standardized assessment measures provide one way for the district to monitor the effectiveness of our programming. Certain benchmark assessments along the 4K-12 school experience provide the district with a way to check progress of students and affirm effectiveness of academic programming. These assessments include the ACT for Juniors, ACT Aspire for Freshmen and Sophomores, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for grades 3-7, and DIBELS for grades K-2.

### ACT Longitudinal Performance

Testing Area	National Benchmark	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
English	18	23.7	22.3	22.8	22.1
Mathematics	22	22.5	21.8	21.6	21.7
Reading	22	23.4	22.2	22.7	22.1
Science	23	23.2	22.8	22.7	22.4
Composite	1-36	23.3	22.4	22.7	22.3

These Composite Score results for MGHS and MG21 11th grade students show repeated performance above the state and national norms and competitive results with our neighboring districts in Dane County.

Beginning in 2014-15, the State of Wisconsin required all 9th and 10th grade students to participate in the ACT Aspire assessment. This data allows school districts to predict the college and career readiness levels of their students as they progress toward graduation.

### ACT Aspire Performance

Percentage of Students who are Ready and Exceeding based on ACT Benchmarks	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Math – Grade 9	55.9%	53.8%	53.4%
Reading – Grade 9	57%	57.4%	54.9%
Math – Grade 10	47%	52.7%	49%
Reading – Grade 10	46.6%	56.2%	51.4%

## Math Instruction

Math instruction at MGSD has been evolving with students learning and experiencing in a more relevant and engaging way. The changes in instruction are a result of the District's decision to develop a more rigorous math program for all students. A mathematically rigorous program does not mean a more advanced program, but rather a better-balanced program designed to meet the needs of all students. Over the past two years, math teachers at the elementary and middle school levels have been improving instruction to provide conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and mathematical application.

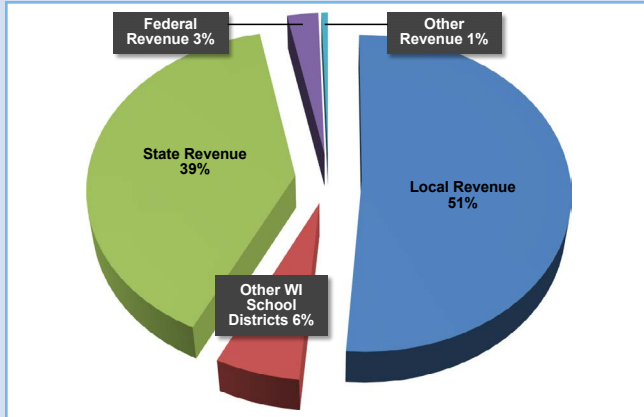
In the past, math instruction was largely focused on procedural skills: memorizing formulas and performing calculations. This approach did not allow opportunities for students to make connections between mathematics topics, and often gave students the impression that math was irrelevant. For many, math was just a series of facts, formulas, and procedures to memorize that most people were rarely going to use beyond the classroom.

That isn't to say facts, formulas and procedures are not important. They most certainly are, but they are tools that help us to engage. Math consists of problem solving, reasoning, discussion, and trial and error. If you've ever tried to build a deck, estimate the cost to throw a party, or create a budget, you have been faced with the challenges that math problems can create. Students are learning that math is challenging and messy, but also that math is relevant to their lives. In adjusting our curriculum, we are preparing students to both understand math and be prepared to use it in their lives, regardless of the career path they choose.

# 2017-2018 BUDGET OVERVIEW

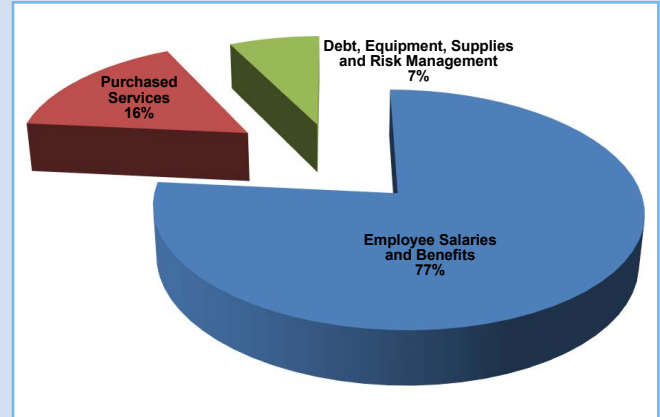
## Revenues for Funds 10 and 27

Where does the funding come from for the General Fund (Fund 10) and Special Education Fund (Fund 27)? The main revenue source for the Monona Grove School District is from local sources (51% of all revenue in Fund 10 and 27), of which are property taxes and student fees. State categorical aid which includes Equalization Aid, Special Education Aid and other categorical aid is 39% of our budget.



## Expenditures for Funds 10 and 27

How does the District spend the funds it receives? The majority of the money that the District receives in our General Fund (Fund 10) and Special Education Fund (Fund 27) is on personnel. As you can see from the graph, 77% of the District budget is on salaries and benefits.



## Tax Levy

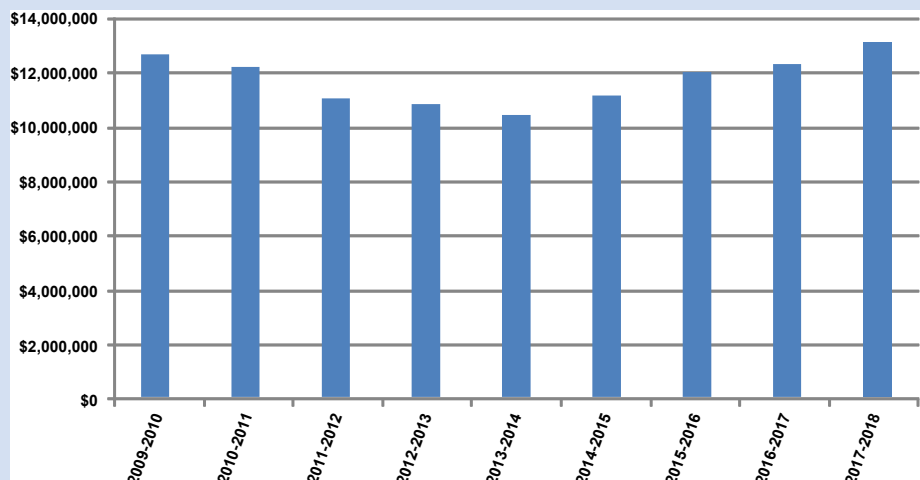
Fund	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
General Fund (Fund 10)	\$18,402,312	\$18,946,673	\$18,895,942	\$18,686,132	\$21,697,838	\$21,329,495
Non-Referendum Debt Service (Fund 38)	\$370,560	\$559,077	\$615,988	\$651,712	\$596,965	\$601,965
Referendum Approved Debt Service (Fund 39)	\$4,567,940	\$4,837,408	\$4,922,110	\$5,026,488	\$4,929,626	\$5,768,500
Community Service Fund (Fund 80)	\$153,048	\$245,240	\$245,240	\$315,250	\$275,000	\$350,500
<b>Total Levy</b>	<b>\$23,493,860</b>	<b>\$24,588,398</b>	<b>\$24,679,280</b>	<b>\$24,679,582</b>	<b>\$27,499,429</b>	<b>\$28,050,460</b>

## Mill Rate

Fund	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
General Fund (Fund 10)	\$10.23	\$10.68	\$10.32	\$9.76	\$10.96	\$10.15
Non-Referendum Debt Service (Fund 38)	\$0.21	\$0.32	\$0.34	\$0.34	\$0.30	\$0.29
Referendum Approved Debt Service (Fund 39)	\$2.54	\$2.73	\$2.69	\$2.63	\$2.49	\$2.75
Community Service Fund (Fund 80)	\$0.09	\$0.14	\$0.13	\$0.16	\$0.14	\$0.17
<b>Total Mill Rate</b>	<b>\$13.06</b>	<b>\$13.85</b>	<b>\$13.48</b>	<b>\$12.89</b>	<b>\$13.89</b>	<b>\$13.35</b>

## Equalization Aid

Changes in the Amount of State Aid Directly Affect the Local Tax Levy





# MG21: LOOKING FORWARD

The Monona Grove Liberal Arts Charter School for the 21st Century (MG21) has been awarded a planning grant from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The grant allows MG21, which currently serves grades 9-12, to expand its offerings to middle school students (grades 6-8).

The grant is for approximately \$500,000 over five years. Like most grants, the funds must be used in a specific way: can be used to plan and develop curriculum, to draft operational guidelines, as well as to fill some technology and space considerations.

"Obviously, we are thrilled to receive the grant," Superintendent Dan Olson said. "We will begin the planning process next year, with a goal of expanding enrollment in 2019-20." MG21 currently enrolls about 45-50 high school students each year.

This grant allows the District and MG21 to expand offerings to an additional 50 middle schoolers who are interested in a small project-based setting, with a focus on academic skill-building and educating the whole student with a wellness focus.

MG21's student and school goals are

1. Educate the whole person: To educate the whole person and help students learn and discover the path they are walking.
2. Rigorous academic skills and social-emotional growth: To foster students' academic (writing, thinking, reading, math, discussion), 21st century skills, and social-emotional skills in order for them to be successful in school and after graduation
3. Project based inquiry: Facilitate authentic learning experiences anchored by student-generated projects.
4. Build and connect with community: To have students recognize their moral obligation to themselves, their peers and their community (school and larger).



"We are so grateful for our school community and the education that our children are receiving. The creativity and compassion of our teachers creates a wonderful and fun learning community."  
– Cory F., Parent

MONONA GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

**BUILDING TOGETHER. FORWARD TOGETHER.**

After years of extensive planning, committee work, and community input, the Board of Education has approved a long-term facilities plan to address enrollment growth, improve safety and security, as well as perform high-priority maintenance and repairs.

Also, in the next five years alone, enrollments at Taylor Prairie, Cottage Grove, and Glacial Drumlin Schools are projected to be over capacity. The District began long-range facilities planning in 2015 to address several key challenges facing our schools.

The District's responsible, long-range planning addresses our most immediate facility needs:



**Growth:** The District has grown by more than 525 students over the last 10 years and is projected to grow by another 700 students over the next decade.



**Safety and Security:** There are opportunities to make our schools even safer, including the construction of controlled, more secure main entrances at Winnequah School and MG21.



**Maintenance:** The District is facing \$14.8 million in deferred maintenance and repairs.



**Monona Grove School District**  
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"I am so grateful for the teachers and staff in the Monona Grove School District. As a parent, nothing matters more than the well-being of our children, and I feel our District shares these same values. My children received a quality education that provided them with skills to become responsible and well-rounded individuals as well as preparedness for college. They were given opportunities to face the demands of the future and become contributing members of society."

– Kari B., Parent