



## **Facilities Planning Committee Sept. 8, 2016 Meeting Summary**

### **Introductions, Welcome & Grounding Activity**

Superintendent George Mavroulis welcomed 23 of the 25 community members who were asked to serve on the Facilities Planning Committee, while 20 minutes were spent on introductions and having each member explain what they brought to the committee.

“The reason you are here is we live in a highly desirable area and we have a highly desirable school district,” he said, noting more than 80 people expressed interest and more than 60 filled out a short application. “That tells you about this community and how they put the needs of our children first.”

Mavroulis noted the committee is a blend of residents from the five areas that make up the District. The goal was also to bring in people with a wide range of perspectives.

He also reminded the committee it is important to remember that 70-75 percent of District residents don’t have children in our schools.

### **Charge of the Committee**

Mavroulis said different MCPASD school boards have given different charges. Two committees earlier this century were told that changing grade configurations wasn’t an option. The last committee was told to dream big and that referendum in 2012 passed with 68 percent.

“This Board put no limitations,” he said. “You should dream big.”

He hopes the committee will brainstorm lots of options. The plan is to bring recommendations to the Board of Education in the spring and they will make a decision about a possible referendum.

### **Potential Timeline**

The committee plans to meet month through at least May, Mavroulis said. Possible solutions would then be shared with the Board, which will make a decision in the summer of 2017 about whether to go to referendum, he said.

If referendum questions move forward, the District would spend the remainder of 2017 and parts of 2018 communicating with the community. Mavroulis believes the earliest a vote could occur would be April 2018. Another option would be November 2018. He explained the rate of successful referendums is highest during those two election times than others.

If a referendum was approved, the earliest new construction would be available for occupancy is the summer of 2019, although he thinks 2020 is a more realistic move-in date.

### **Current Enrollment and Available Space**

Assistant Superintendent Sherri Cyra shared a number of enrollment documents with the committee. She noted this year's kindergarten class is the District's largest ever and 59 over projections. She also said kindergarten is the hardest to project because it is based on birth rates and many of those children they aren't in the District when they were children.

She also explained that class sizes are smaller at Sauk Trail because the school's poverty rates are higher than at any other District school, which qualifies them for state and federal funds to keep class sizes lower in grades K-3.

Park and West Middleton are the elementary schools with the fewest available classrooms. Each school has one available classroom this school year.

A lengthy discussion was held about the available space at Middleton High School. Principal Steve Plank noted there are 13-17 classrooms available during any one period – which works out to about one classroom per subject area -- and that the school is operating at 85 percent capacity.

“It's about as tight as we want to run it,” he said. The number of rooms available is very deceptive. It's very tight.”

There was also concern about teaching in more than one classroom, although Plank noted that is common in high schools above 70-75 percent capacity. MHS is almost 70 years old with lots of additions, which he noted means some rooms can 30-plus students while others that are tight with 24. Finally, he said what capacity doesn't represent is how tight the hallways, cafeteria and bathrooms are or that the library-media center hasn't grown as the enrollment has.

Glacier Creek has one available classroom this year, but Principal Bill Deno that is deceptive because two computer labs are being used as sixth-grade classrooms this year. Glacier Creek is also the one school over capacity for this school year.

Cyra noted projects were most off at the elementary level, which is nearly 100 students above the forecast. One of the highest above projections was at Sauk Trail, which was unexpected because there they are built out, she said.

District officials also provided information about open enrollment. Mavroulis estimated about 150 open enrollment students will go to school in the District in 2016-17. “So when people here we are growing and taking all those kids from Madison that isn't the case,” he said.

The Board also made changes to its open enrollment policy this year. It changed the gate when open enrollment families must re-apply; now it occurs between fourth and fifth grade. The Board took no new open enrollment and also didn't allow siblings of open enrollment students in the District for the first time.

There were question about the 4K program. The District has one 4K classroom, while the rest are at community centers, Cyra said. A group recommended that approach a few years ago, partly to avoid going into competition with community partners.

### **Enrollment Forecasting Challenges**

The District receives a report on enrollment projections for the coming school year from UW-Madison's Applied Population Lab every December, Mavroulis said. APL provides four models: baseline (10 years), 5 year, 2 year and kindergarten growth model.

APL projected about 6,450 resident students for 2016-17, while current enrollment of resident students is about 100 above that, he noted.

"Our projections are predicted on the past, although there are some limitations to that," he said.

Mark Roffers, an urban developer who forecasts residential development and neighborhood turnover, will attend the next meeting. He has worked with school districts in Sun Prairie, Verona and Waunakee so he is familiar with what is happening in the area, Mavroulis said.

The hope is Roffers will help the District develop more accurate long-term forecasts about its enrollment growth, Business Services Director Lori Ames said.

### **School and District Boundary Lines**

Eight municipalities are part of the District and Mavroulis noted that school district boundaries don't go with municipality boundaries. He said at one time Northlake Neighborhood was part of the Waunakee School District but the land was traded to MCPASD, which gave up some land in the Town of Westport. Meanwhile, there were discussions about the Neighborhood of Bishops Bay, which is part of city of Middleton but children living there will attend Waunakee Schools, being traded but nothing was worked out.

The committee then looked at maps with boundary lines for all six elementary schools. Some schools, such as Northside and Park, only have one set of boundary lines. Meanwhile, Sauk Trail has two, including one in Blackhawk neighborhood. Mavroulis explained in 2004 Sauk Trail had declining enrollment, while Sunset Ridge was crowded so a part of Blackhawk that hadn't been developed was shifted to Sauk Trail.

In 2004, West Middleton was also tight so High Point Estates area was moved to Elm Lawn. In that case, children who had previously attended West Middleton had to switch schools. Another example was in 2009, when boundary lines were redrawn and some students who had previously attended Northside were moved to Elm Lawn.

Ames explained that one reason why West Middleton is broken up dates to an agreement in the 1990s between Madison Metropolitan and MCPASD. She said a lot of property was being traded with very little being gained and lots of expenses for both districts. The agreement in place gives residential areas south of the Beltline and east of Pioneer Road to Madison Metropolitan, while MCPASD keeps the commercial property. It helped keep taxes down for Middleton.

Mavroulis noted at one Hawks Landing was in the District and if MCPASD still had it overcrowding would be an even bigger concern.

The only property the District currently owns is in the Pope Farms Conservancy. He said the property is big enough to hold an elementary school or a combination elementary-middle school.

**Other Background Information Requested by the Committee**

- Want Third Friday chart with open enrollment in and out of the District.
- Demographic information. What do our students look like?
- Tour facilities with the committee or hold meetings at a different school each month.
- Explanation of how school funding works with enrollment.
- Historical data on referendum results in the District.
- Facilities condition report
- How do facilities and enrollment increase impact student performance?
- Square footage by each school and size of all classrooms.
- Should any work be short term until a referendum can be implemented?
- How does facility design help students learn?