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MTSD Board of Education Approves Referendum Question for April 7 Ballot

Action follows school district's comprehensive review of facility needs, community survey results, and the work of a Community Task Force

MEQUON, WI — At its Monday meeting, the Mequon-Thiensville School District Board of Education voted unanimously to place a referendum question on the ballot for Tuesday, April 7, 2020.

The board approved the measure after reviewing an administrative recommendation that was informed by several components, including the development of a long-range master plan for facilities, the work of a Community Task Force and the results of a community-wide survey.

The question on the ballot will ask residents of Mequon and Thiensville to approve \$55.7 million in general obligation bonds to address capacity concerns due to enrollment growth by funding additions and renovated spaces, as well as enhancing district-wide safety and security. The referendum would have a tax impact of \$30 per year on every \$100,000 of assessed property value.

If approved, the referendum would allow the district to build additions at three elementary schools to increase space available for core classrooms, art, physical education, music, and special education. Projects would also include expanding cafeterias at the elementary and middle schools, and renovating targeted spaces at the middle schools, including music and specialist classrooms to support current needs.

Additionally, the district would enhance safety by improving traffic circulation and parking lot queuing space at all schools, and by making restrooms and playgrounds more accessible for those with mobility impairments. Plans call for developing a more identifiable main entrance at Homestead High School and other district-wide improvements to control visitor access, along with connecting to municipal water and enhancing fire suppression and alarm systems at the elementary and middle schools.

"The board and administration have engaged the community to develop a strong solution to address the district's needs related to capacity, growth, safety, and accessibility," said Krista Brookman, board president. "If approved, the referendum would address our most pressing needs and set a solid foundation for the future of our schools and the students they serve. School leaders look forward to continuing these important conversations as we move forward."

Last fall, the Community Task Force met six times to prioritize the needs identified in the district's Long-Range Master Plan for Facilities and explore next steps. Based on a charge from the school board, the task force was asked to establish priorities and make recommendations to school leadership regarding identified facilities challenges.

MORE



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The task force's principal recommendations indicated the district should take action to address capacity challenges related to enrollment growth and bolster safety and security.

The community-wide survey, which was open November 19 through December 4, received a total of 1,167 completed responses. It asked stakeholders to review the district's facility needs and provide their input on how those needs should be best addressed. 85 percent of survey respondents indicated that they believed the district's facility needs must be addressed now. A full survey report was presented to the board in December.

"The development of a strategic long-range master plan for facilities, the outstanding and diligent work of the Community Task Force and the input we received through our community-wide survey have been critical to proposing a sound solution to stakeholders," said Matthew Joynt, Ph.D., superintendent of schools. "We would like to thank everyone who has taken part in this process so far, and we will continue to provide opportunities to engage in the conversation."

Visit www.mtsd.k12.wi.us/facilities to learn more about MTSD's facilities planning process, review data and enrollment reports, and access a tax impact calculator.

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