

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Rick Waski

rickwaski@monroe.k12.wi.us

(608) 328-7135

Monroe School District Facilities Committee Presents Recommendations to Board of Education

Monroe, WI – On Monday evening the District’s Facilities Committee (DFC) presented to the Board of Education a summary of their findings and recommendations to address numerous concerns identified in the District Facilities Assessment Study completed by CG Schmidt (CGS) and Plunkett Raysich Architects (PRA). Presenting members included Andrea Sweeney, Jason Kundert, John Emmons, Tim Brown, Nate Lancaster, and Ron Markham.

The DFC was launched in February of 2018 with a shared commitment to address all buildings to achieve District equity and maintain operation of at least four schools: 2 elementary, 1 middle and 1 high school. In total, the committee has held 10 meetings, discussing district financing, tax impacts, population studies analysis, community survey results, building capacities, and more. The DFC also toured all district buildings to better understand firsthand their facility needs and to evaluate potential solutions.

The DFC consists of District and building administration and staff, as well as numerous members of the community, with a shared interest in helping shape the future of the facilities of the School District of Monroe. Throughout this extensive process, more than a dozen different building solutions were explored and evaluated by the committee. The DFC focused on creating predictable grade level configurations, realistic transitions for students, compiling a capital maintenance list, maintaining safety and security, meeting ADA requirements, maintaining manageably-sized elementary schools, and maximizing the use of existing buildings.

Over the past several months the DFC explored three additional variations beyond our current configuration to address the aged high school. Each variation called for the closing of Abraham Lincoln Elementary School and the construction of a new combined Middle/High School, serving grades 7-12, on the site of the current school. To further understand this solution, the DFC toured Berlin, Brown Deer, Port Washington and Ripon School Districts, three of which have the same grade-level configuration and similar challenges facing their districts.

“This has been a long process, involving a lot of late nights, but it’s been extremely gratifying to be a part of it,” said Jason Kundert, a parent and community-member on the committee. “We’re working to

make sure our kids and our district have access to the best schools we can give them, and seeing all of these people come together from the schools and the community to further that goal makes me feel really confident that Monroe will continue to be a great place to raise a family.”

After narrowing down the field of potential solutions, District Administration conducted a confidential survey of the DFC to determine the preferred solution for each committee member. After this thorough process, the DFC unanimously recommended “Solution 8” to the Board of Education. Solution 8 calls for a new combined middle/high school, reusing the existing high school and closing Abraham Lincoln Elementary School. The committee selected this proposed solution due to the commitment to reuse the existing high school site and building by including major additions, heavy renovations and new athletic fields.

To keep the community informed, the District and Board of Education announced that they plan to solicit community feedback on this proposed solution before coming to a conclusion, and expect to issue a district-wide survey to all residents in either late summer or early fall.

“The DFC did an outstanding job of accomplishing the mission the board gave them to ensure Monroe has quality buildings for our students, while maximizing existing educational areas and core spaces,” said Board President, Dan Bartholf. “They’ve been working very hard since February of 2018. We’re looking forward to presenting the proposed solution to the community and getting direct feedback before taking any additional steps.”

Those interested in learning more about the facilities planning process or to obtain a copy of the District’s Facilities Assessment Study, or the DFC Executive Summary should contact District Administrator, Rick Waski via email at rickwaski@monroe.k12.wi.us, or check out the district website at www.monroeschools.com.

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