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TO: Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Mary B. Pfeiffer, District Administrator
PK-12 Administrative Team

DATE: June 21, 2018

RE: Facilities Study Recommendation

The Board of Education directed Administration to provide a recommendation at the facilities meeting on June 21, 2018. The administrative team met to review and discuss options and priorities. Administrators were divided into teams representing elementary, secondary, and District Office. They reviewed materials that had been previously presented to the Board, along with the security upgrades, and prioritized options within specific dollar amounts (form enclosed). As a part of developing the administrative recommendation, teams discussed their vision for the elementary school structure in our District. Safety and security upgrades was the number one priority in each of the spending threshold scenarios. The results are as follows:

Spending threshold of \$135 million:

1. Priority 1 = Safety & security upgrades at all sites
2. The top 2 and 3 priorities were all at the middle school level.
 - a. New grade 7-8 school – four teams made this their second or third choice
 - b. New grade 5-6 school – four teams made this their second or third choice
 - c. One team suggested demolishing most of Shattuck and keeping the auditorium. The same team recommended renovating Horace Mann at the current site. Additionally, this team recommended building the indoor performance facility.

Recommendation at \$135 million: We would recommend safety and security upgrades at all sites, and building a new grade 7-8 school as well as a new grade 5-6 building. The current Horace Mann could be easily converted into a three- or four-section K-4 elementary school and provide immediate relief related to space at other elementary schools.

Although a specific location for the new grade 5-6 school and new grade 7-8 school was not discussed, based upon the review of the prioritization by the administrative team as well as the pros/cons document (enclosed) this recommendation would prioritize a new 7-8 building on the current Shattuck site. Additionally, it would be recommended that the new grade 5-6 building would be placed on the Pendleton site. This would be a constant in all recommendations.

Spending threshold of \$150 million:

1. Priority 1 = Safety & security upgrades at all sites
2. The top 2 and 3 priorities were almost all at the middle school level.
 - a. New grade 7-8 school – four teams made this their second or third choice, while one team suggested demolishing most of Shattuck and keeping the auditorium.
 - b. New grade 5-6 school – three teams made this their second or third choice while two teams suggested remodeling at the current site.
 - c. One team’s second priority focused on creating larger elementary schools and closing others.
 - d. Most teams focused on the high school in their fourth priority with two indicating to upgrade the infrastructure and one prioritizing the master plan.
 - e. Three teams had the indoor performance facility or Pickard Auditorium renovation as priority 4 or 5.

Recommendation at \$150 million: We would recommend safety and security upgrades and building a new grade 7-8 school and a new grade 5-6 building. The current Horace Mann could be easily converted into a three- or four-section K-4 elementary school and provide immediate relief related to space at other elementary schools. Additionally, we would recommend discussion related to adding the indoor performance facility or the Pickard auditorium renovation to this option.

Spending threshold of \$200 million:

1. Priority 1 = Safety & security upgrades at all sites
2. The top 2 and 3 priorities were almost all at the middle school level.
 - a. New grade 7-8 school – four teams made this their second or third priority, while one team suggested demolishing most of Shattuck and keeping the auditorium.
 - b. New grade 5-6 school – three teams made this their second or third priority while two teams suggested remodeling at the current site.
 - c. Neenah High School – four teams prioritized Neenah High School as priority 4 with two prioritizing completing infrastructure upgrades, and one prioritizing the master plan upgrades and the other adding the indoor performance facility.
 - d. Priority 3 for one group was the elementary infrastructure.

Recommendation at \$200 million: We would recommend safety and security upgrades at all sites, and building a new grade 7-8 school and a new grade 5-6 building. The current Horace Mann could be easily converted into a three or four-section K-4 elementary school and provide immediate relief related to space at other elementary schools. For this amount, there would need to be additional conversation related to dollars spent at both the high school and elementary levels.

Spending threshold of \$260 million:

3. Priority 1 = Safety & security upgrades at all sites
4. The top 2 and 3 priorities were almost all at the middle school level.
 - a. New grade 7-8 school – four teams made this their second or third choice, while one team suggested demolishing most of Shattuck and keeping the auditorium.
 - b. New grade 5-6 school – three teams made this their second or third priority while two teams suggested remodeling at the current site.
 - c. Neenah High School – four teams prioritized Neenah High School as priority 4 with two prioritizing completing infrastructure upgrades, one prioritizing the master plan upgrades, and the other adding the indoor performance facility.

- d. One team created a different option and created larger elementary schools while closing others as their option three.
- e. Priority 4 for another group was also to create larger elementary schools and close others.

Recommendation at \$260 million: We would recommend safety and security upgrades at all sites, building a new grade 7-8 school and also a new grade 5-6 building. The current Horace Mann could be easily converted into a three or four-section K-4 elementary school and provide immediate relief related to space at other elementary schools. Additionally, we would include the NHS master plan along with the indoor performance facility and creating a performing arts center (upgrading Pickard, adding a black box, and adding new classroom spaces for band, choir, and orchestra). The remaining dollars would be used to either develop a master plan should all elementary schools remain open or renovate and create larger K-4 schools while closing others. Should additional dollars be needed, a discussion of borrowing for the remainder would be recommended.

One of the discussions we had as a large group was that of maintaining small neighborhood schools or creating larger elementary schools. There was unanimous support to create at least 3 or 4-section K-4 elementary schools and close others. Several reasons include:

1. Learning and staffing efficiencies – more flexibility in staffing, teaming with three or four teachers at one grade level, and less traveling teachers in the areas of art, music, and physical education.
2. In a school with more sections per grade level, there is greater opportunity to divide students that have challenges being together. With 1-2 sections, this is extremely difficult.
3. It is not necessarily the size of school that matters. It is more important that there is not high staff turnover. Staff that know our students and their needs come from staff that understand our school culture and climate. Staff with longevity assist kids, as well as parents to feel safe, secure, and emit a sense of a strong school community. Staff with longevity build stronger relationships with our students and their families.
4. There has been an argument that neighborhood schools are important. The administrative team would be happy to share our perspective about this. The culture and feeling at our schools is not due to where they are positioned. The students, families and staff create the feeling of a warm and welcoming culture. This does not happen based upon the location of the school.
5. Efficiency in maintenance and operations of larger buildings. Although there may be additional square footage, we would have an opportunity to reassess needs at all buildings.
6. Most importantly, we need to think bigger than we have in the past. Continuing to piecemeal our buildings is not fiscally responsible and our students and staff deserve better.

As an administrative team, we understand that this was not something the Board wanted to pursue, but we strongly feel that this would be the best for the future of our students, families, and our District.

In conclusion, we are providing a collective administrative recommendation. We understand that things may change based upon what the community survey results indicate. Simply stated and if project phases are necessary, phase one would prioritize safety at all of our sites and new buildings for grades 5-

6 and grades 7-8. Reiterating what was shared previously, the new 5-6 school would be placed on the Pendleton site and the new 7-8 school would be at the current Shattuck site. If a second phase was necessary, it would include addressing upgrades and enhancements at Neenah High School as well as at our elementary buildings.

Administration will be in attendance at our facilities study meeting on June 21, 2018 to answer any questions you may have.