



To: Wisconsin Heights Board of Education
Jordan Sinz, Superintendent
Jim Wede, Performance Services, Inc

From: Dorreen Dembski, DD Communication Services

Date: June 17, 2020

RE: Executive Summary - Virtual Community Conversations

The Wisconsin Heights School District hosted a total of five (5) virtual community conversations on June 10 and June 16. Two of these conversations were for staff and three were open to the community.

Purpose:

- Present a short introduction to provide attendees with information about the current facilities' work.
- Ask participants questions about the information presented to better understand community feedback.
- Gather community questions - understanding that we may not yet have the answers!

Participants:

While the number of participants varied from the beginning of the session to the end of each session, the following numbers are close approximates of the total participants. At each event, at least six (6) people were from the Wisconsin Heights School District, PSI, or DD Communication Services, and therefore are deducted from the total.

Total staff: 59

June 10: 9 a.m. - 40 (less 6)

June 10: 3 p.m. - 31 (less 6)

Total community participants: 46

June 10: 10:30 a.m. - 16 (less 6)

June 10: 6 p.m. - 24 (less 6)

June 12: 1 p.m. - 24 (less 6)

Overall, very few people spoke comments during the events. Therefore, it is important to weigh the community survey results more heavily than the comments collected at the Community Conversations. Still, the comments collected from the conversations are helpful because some

common questions and comments emerged when the session feedback was considered as a whole.

The questions and comments that emerged are:

What will be done with the vacant buildings in Black Earth and Mazomanie?

Discussion: This will be an earnest discussion with Village officials.

What will be the operational savings?

The discussion included:

- *Reducing travel time for staff between buildings.*
- *Bussing costs remain about the same.*
- *Avoid the cost of urgent roof repairs at Black Earth and other repairs.*
- *One-campus avoids the cost of maintenance, groundskeeping and utilities at each building.*
- *Staff reductions can be accommodated through resignations and retirements.*

What are the specific educational advantages of a one-campus district?

The discussion included:

- *All traveling staff can remain at one campus thus providing more time for student instruction.*
- *Modern learning environments include infrastructure designed to accommodate easy access to technology throughout the building and operational efficiencies. Modern learning environments may attract students to the district as well.*
- *The design includes flexible spaces for small and large group instruction to meet the varied needs of all learners and can be converted to classrooms if needed for enrollment growth.*
- *One campus allows the opportunity for students to learn together across grade levels such as with reading buddies, or for students to participate in advanced curriculum, etc as their needs dictate.*

Staff concerns about the design included:

- Soundproofing
- Classroom size
- Parking

The discussion included:

Staff input will be gathered into the design if/when a referendum is approved.

How will the site safety be addressed?

- Proximity to Hwy 14 (entering and exiting the site)
Discussion: Work is underway to contact the WI Department of Transportation.
- On-site traffic
Discussion: Parent and bus drop-off will be designed for safety.
- Adequate parking
Discussion: Additional staff and visitor parking on-site will be adequate for the capacity of the entire building.

How do we know the budget of the referendum is indeed the cost?

Discussion: The Board may only borrow what it specifically asks for in the resolution.

What is done with money if vacant buildings are sold?

Discussion: This is a Board decision. The money can be used to offset the cost of the referendum projects, if the Board so deems it to be. No decisions have been made.

Will local labor (trade) be used?

Discussion: All projects will be open to bid.

Is it competitively bid?

Discussion: Yes.

Benefits of the elementary wing (one-campus) as identified by participants:

- Reduced travel for staff.
- Easier scheduling/transportation for parents.
- Uses all resources more wisely.
- Opportunity to build a more attractive/marketable district for future families.

Concerns about a one-campus district as identified by participants:

- Vacated buildings - moving schools out of the villages.
- The site itself.
- Blending young students with high school students.

Should the Board include the MS/HS repairs in the referendum proposal?

Discussion: This was generally the consensus that the repairs are needed, and therefore the \$5 million should be included. Most comments indicated, "Get it done all at once." However, there was no clear indication from participants about whether it should be included with the elementary question as one question, or if it should be asked separately.

There were at least three comments about why the auditorium was not included in the presentation.