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Dr. Jamie J. Foeckler
SUPERINTENDENT

To: Board of Education
From: Dr. Jamie J. Foeckler, District Administrator
Re: Development of and Charge for a Facilities Advisory Committee
Date: September 18, 2024

Recommendation: The School Board will approve the formation of a Facilities Advisory Committee to help develop a Long-Range Facilities Plan, aligned with our Focus Plan Goals of creating An Exceptional Place to Learn, Work, and Engage, to serve the school district through 2045.

Background: The School Board requested in July of 2024 that the administration develop a proposed charge, parameters, and timeline for the work of a Facilities Advisory Committee. The formation of a Facilities Advisory Committee is driven by a necessity to review, update, and potentially expand existing facilities to address the needs for the school district as it relates to instruction, security, and infrastructure (ie. - mechanical, electrical, and plumbing).

Current district facilities were constructed between the 1920s and 1950s, and have become a fixture and beloved symbol of Whitefish Bay. The Middle School was built in 1918 and had additions in the 1930s, 1980s, and 1996. Both Cumberland and Richards were built in 1928 and had additions or major renovations in the 1950s, 1992, and 2010. The High School was built in 1932 and had additions in the 1950s, 1967, and 2010. Lydell was built in 1955. The schools have been an important part of the community since they were founded, and there are many resident families with multi-generational graduates from Whitefish Bay. The community understands the historic value that all of the buildings bring to the community as well. As part of this strong tradition, district facilities have been maintained, improved and added onto over the years as educational needs and the Village and its residents have evolved within our landlocked geography.

Periodically, the district engages in long-term planning for its facilities. The purpose behind these periodic long-range plans is to have a representative group of community members develop a comprehensive view of the current state of district facilities, emerging and developing trends in educational practices, demographic projections and other information and recommend specific maintenance, improvements and / or additions to the school board and administration.

The district last developed a Long-Range Facilities Plan in 2008, and this plan provided strong guidance for district investment since its development. Projects and improvements recommended and performed subsequently to the 2008 Committee's recommendations include: the 2011 Great Room additions at Cumberland and Richards, as well as the 2011 addition of the music wing and Link at the High School. The 2019 renovation of the Middle School library, the 2020 renovation of the High School library, the 2020 remodels of the Cumberland and Richards libraries were also projects recommended in the District's 2008 Long-Range Facilities Plan. Other recent projects, such as the 2024 renovations of six (6) HS Science labs, and the 2024 rebuild of the High School tower are part of the District's ongoing [long-range planning cycle](#) that was last completed in 2019.

The district is now beyond the horizon of the 2008 Long-Range Facilities Plan and the 2019 Long-Range Plan. Almost every improvement or addition recommended has been made. Furthermore, additional projects and maintenance not foreseen in 2008 and 2019 have now become the bulk of the district's investment.

Meanwhile, the school district's long-term debt will be completely retired over the next couple of years. This debt, approved and issued in 2009 subsequent to the 2008 planning process, funded some but not all of the 2008 recommendations. As in 2006, the school district has an opportunity to address some long term capital facility needs identified in the planning process by incurring new long term debt, and because of the timing, it could be possible to fund some projects with new long-term debt while minimizing the impact via the community property tax levy. Because authority to incur any long-term debt outside state imposed revenue limits requires voter approval through a referendum, voters will want to see a well developed long-range plan focused on the needs of the school district before granting authority to incur new long-term debt.

The formation of a Facilities Advisory Committee is a crucial step in this review process in order to educate the community on the extent and nature of facility needs and to obtain valuable feedback from stakeholders.

Proposed Charge to the Committee: The administration recommends the following charge be given to the Facilities Advisory Committee:

- With the Focus Plan and the recent Facilities Condition Assessment and Educational Space Adequacy Report from PRA, review school district and community current and future needs prioritized on the following categories which are inclusive of student and educational benefits:
 - learning spaces aligned with research-based best practices;
 - infrastructure;
 - health, safety, and security for students, staff, and community;
 - sustainability and environmental impact.
- Develop a comprehensive 20 year plan for Whitefish Bay school district facilities based on any identified needs for remodeling, repurposing and/or adding to facilities on school district campuses.
- Consider implications of facility use by other community agencies, organizations, and groups.

Work of the Committee: The administration offers the following as representative tasks for the Facilities Advisory Committee:

- Review student enrollment trends and projections for the next 20 years.
- Review current uses of school district facilities and consider trends and forces that may change the way facilities are used in the future.
- Review the impact of technology on the future of educational facilities.
- Review current research about the construction, remodeling, and repurposing of educational facilities.
- Review reports on the current condition of school district facilities in light of infrastructure; health, safety, and security for students, staff, and community; student and educational benefits; sustainability and environmental impact to meet current and future needs.
- Review uses of school district facilities by community agencies, organizations, and groups.
- Consider educational, athletic, and recreational spaces that currently are and are not addressed through the existing school district's capital improvement plan.
- Review current debt service schedule and potential financial implications of any new long term debt obligations.

Proposed Parameters and Operating Assumptions: The administration recommends the following

parameters and operating assumptions to guide the work of the Facility Advisory Committee:

- The development of several facilities options for the School Board to review once the committee has completed its work; bi-monthly updates for the Board during the time the committee is in place.
- Each recommendation from the committee will have an associated date (or date range), projected / estimated cost, category and rationale. The Committee can further organize and group individual recommendations as it determines useful for review.
- A reasonable budget to cover the costs of outside expertise and administrative costs for materials and meetings.

Proposed Committee Composition: The administration recommends that the Facilities Advisory Committee be composed of between 25 to 30 community members, parents, activity support group representatives and staff. The School Board will approve Co-chairs of this committee. Among the individuals and groups represented on the committee could be:

- Two School Board representatives, fine arts support groups, athletic and activity support groups, community leaders, parent support groups (including elementary and middle school PTO's and the High School Parent Advisory Committee), Director of Business Services, Superintendent of Schools, Director of Buildings and Grounds, Director of Teaching and Learning Services, Director of Special Education and Pupil Services, building principal representation, teaching staff, and Activities Director.

Outside Expertise: The administration recommends that the Facilities Advisory Committee access the services of appropriate outside expertise, including architectural and other facility evaluation and planning professionals, as deemed appropriate to develop a detailed and useful plan.

Timeline: The administration recommends that the Facilities Advisory Committee be charged with providing updates to the School Board on a bi-monthly basis starting in January of 2025 and a final report of findings and a presentation in January of 2026. The meeting schedule will be determined at a later date by the committee and will meet from January 2025 to August 2025 with additional meetings as needed.