

**MINNETONKA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #276**  
**District Service Center**  
**5621 County Road 101**  
**Minnetonka, Minnesota**

**Summary of March 24, 2022 Study Session**

The School Board of Minnetonka Independent School District #276 met in study session at 6:15 p.m. on Thursday, March 24, 2022 in the Community Room at the District Service Center, 5621 County Road 101, Minnetonka, Minnesota. Chairperson Chris Vitale presided. Other Board members present were: Mark Ambrosen, Katie Becker, Patrick Lee-O'Halloran, John Odom, Meghan Selinger and Superintendent Dennis Peterson, ex officio. Absent: Lisa Wagner.

**REPORTS ON GOALS**

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Dr. Amy LaDue led the discussion. She explained that the first part of the presentation this evening would focus on the belonging work that the elementary principals were conducting in their buildings. Updates were heard from Clear Springs Elementary Assistant Principal David Wicklund, Excelsior Elementary Principal Stacy DeCorsey, and Groveland Elementary Principal Andrew Gilbertson. Highlights of their presentations included the following:

**Clear Springs – Belonging Strategies**

- Radical Daily Welcome
- Listen to Better Understand
- Empower Every Student
- Practice Being Restorative
- Morning Announcements and Classroom Circles
- Mentoring
- Best Buddies
- Black History Month
- World Culture Week
- Social Thinking
- Calm Kits
- Focus on School Climate – We Are Clear Springs!

**Clear Springs - Meetings**

- Evening connection meetings
- Parents representing our diverse community
- Being intentional with our listening
- Partnering with our CS teacher climate team

### Clear Springs - Feedback

- Community Connections
- Middle/High School Connections
- Further conversations on inclusion, race, diversity
- Professional development
- Explore rich texts

### Excelsior – Belonging Strategies

- Morning announcements—friendly 5<sup>th</sup> graders
- Morning Meeting Time
- Student Council
- Junior Coaching
- Hispanic Heritage Month
- Chinese New Year
- Best Buddies
- World Culture Week
- Native American Heritage Month
- Black History Month
- Asian American Pacific Islander Month
- Global Day of Play
- Social Thinking
- Relaxation Club
- Coffee Chat
- Farm Friends Friday

### Excelsior – Listening Session Feedback

- The objective is not to take things away but to make school inclusive for ALL students
- Belonging, acceptance, and celebrating each other
- Events to consider: New Family Welcome, Secret Shop, Halloween, World Culture Week, Holiday Sing-Along
- Provide opportunities for student voice
- Consider the needs of our special education population when planning events
- Curriculum review

### Excelsior – Action Steps

- Coffee Chat Listening Sessions
- Search Institute – Unpacking the Data
- Hiring

### Groveland – Gathering/Analyzing Data

- Search Institute Results
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Meetings
- Search Institute Day
- BILT (narrows the focus)
- Hiring practices

### Groveland - Strategies

- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Leaders
- Responsive Classroom Reboot
- Kari Palmer – You Are a Social Detective – Social Thinking – Staff Trainings

### Groveland – Action Plan/Resources

- Student-identified adult connections
- BILT/RC connection
- Kindness Retreat returns
- Playworks
- Childhood Victories

### Groveland – Student Leadership

- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Meetings
- Student Connections
- Ways staff can continue to make good connections with students
- 3 levels of respect and honor
- Students invited to be leaders in the school

### Groveland – What We Have Learned This Year

- Students need to be involved to feel a connection
- Staff need time and support to be intentional and effective
- The needs are significant

### Groveland – Future Work

- Continue work on developmental relationships with staff (time and training)
- Expand student leadership in the school
- Work as an administrative team to know and understand our staff and students

Executive Director of Finance and Operations Paul Bourgeois then updated the Board on a possible future Tonka Online facility. Highlights of his presentation included the following:

### Future Considerations—Current Program

- First year of Tonka Online Comprehensive operation
- Approximately 330 full-time students K-12
- 20 FTE teachers – one teacher for every 17 students
- COVID-19 Pandemic-driven enrollment
- Market research – what market is there for a high-end rigorous full-time online program post-COVID-19 pandemic
- Steady interest on Tonka Online Supplemental – class by class
- Main question – will high performing students who want a rigorous curriculum full-time move back to in-person learning post-COVID-19

### Other Considerations—Resources

- Lease Levy bonding capacity is fully utilized (for a period of time) with MOMENTUM addition
  - Future capacity will be freed up with further refundings, or enrollment growth – \$212.00 per adjusted pupil unit funding formula in FY23
  - Can only be used for classroom additions that are less than 20% of existing square footage of the building to be added on to
- Operating Capital bonding capacity is fully utilized (for a period of time) with VANTAGE/MOMENTUM construction
  - Future capacity will be freed up with further refundings, or enrollment growth - \$230.03 per adjusted pupil unit funding formula in FY23
- OPEB Trust Excess Assets – limited – but not prohibited - until they build up again after VANTAGE/MOMENTUM utilization
  - Must maintain a reasonable cushion over 100% of OPEB Liabilities to guard against a severe market downturn
- Can always fund bond payments from the General Fund

### Other Considerations—Teaching Spaces

- Teaching Studio concept
- Approximately 100 square feet each
- High level of sound proofing
- Workstation furniture with space for laptop for Zoom-style classes on the laptop
- Video camera with large LED video monitor and whiteboard so teachers can stream classes while teaching “standing up” – at the monitor and whiteboard – just like an in-person classroom

### Phased Approach to Limit Capital Risk—Phase I

- House existing program in 18707 Old Excelsior Boulevard building
- 23 Teaching Studios – supports 330 full-time K-12 TOC students at current ratios
- 2 Administrative Offices
- Replace water loop heating and cooling system with standard HVAC

- Nearing end of service life
- Can be funded using Long Term Facility Maintenance funds
- Increase parking to 89 vehicles from current 65 – serve all three phases
- Stormwater retention pond beneath the existing parking lot
- \$3.0 million construction estimate for November 2023 bid date
- Annual bond payment - \$228,099
- In service August 2024

#### Phase I Pro Forma Financial Information

- Potential FY24 Revenue – 330 full-time K-12 TOC students - \$3,864,273
- Estimated FY24 Expenditures - \$2,150,000
  - 20 FTE teachers @ \$90,000 - \$1,800,000
  - Program manager, custodial and clerical support - \$300,000
  - Building utilities and operations - \$50,000
- Estimated Bond Payment if from General Fund - \$228,099
- Remainder to support other General Fund Expenditures - \$1,486,174

#### Phased Approach to Limit Capital Risk—Phase II

- 24 Teaching Studios
  - Total 47 Phase 1+2 - Supports 660 full-time K-12 TOC students at current ratios
- Restrooms and mechanical spaces to support Phase 2 and Phase 3
- Constructed above the parking lot addition
- \$4.2 million construction estimate for November 2023 bid date
- Annual bond payment - \$319,339
- Assume 5% annual construction inflation for every 12 months after November 2023

#### Phase II Pro Forma Financial Information

- Second tranche of 330 full-time K-12 TOC students
- Potential FY24 Revenue – 330 full-time K-12 TOC students - \$3,864,273
  - Total 660 in the program with 40 FTE teachers
- Estimated FY24 Expenditures - \$1,800,000
  - 20 FTE teachers @ \$90,000 - \$1,800,000
- Estimated Bond Payment if from General Fund - \$319,339
- Remainder to support other General Fund Expenditures- \$1,744,934

#### Phased Approach to Limit Capital Risk—Phase III

- 40 Teaching Studios
  - Total 87 Phase 1+2+3 - Supports 1,320 full-time K-12 TOC students at current ratios
- Constructed above the parking lot addition

- \$5.6 million construction estimate for November 2023 bid date
- Annual bond payment – \$425,785
- Assume 5% annual construction inflation for every 12 months after November 2023

### Phase III Pro Forma Financial Information

- Third and fourth tranche of 330 full-time K-12 TOC students each
- Potential FY24 Revenue – 660 full-time K-12 TOC students - \$7,728,546
  - Total 1,320 in the program with 40 FTE teachers
- Estimated FY24 Expenditures - \$3,600,000
  - 40 FTE teachers @ \$90,000 - \$3,600,000
- Estimated Bond Payment if from General Fund - \$425,785
- Remainder to support other General Fund Expenditures- \$3,702,761

### Summary—Full Buildout

- Direct Revenues Over Direct Expenditures – 1<sup>st</sup> 330-Student Tranche - \$1,486,174
- Direct Revenues Over Direct Expenditures – 2<sup>nd</sup> 330-Student Tranche - \$1,744,934
- Direct Revenues Over Direct Expenditures – 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> 330-Student Tranches- \$3,702,761
- Direct Revenues Over Direct Expenditures – 1,320 Full-Time K-12 TOC - \$6,933,869
- Risk – Will All 330 Full-Time TOC Students Stay In TOC Or Move To In-Person?
- Risk – Can Full-Time TOC Enrollment Be Sustained Over 20 Year Bond Life To Pay Off Bonds?
- Easiest Part – Building the facility
- Hard Part – Sustaining the enrollment for 20 years to pay off bonds

Chairperson Vitale thanked Mr. Bourgeois for the presentation and noted that it gave the Board much to think about.

### **UPDATE ON MOMENTUM PROGRAMMING**

Dr. Peterson said this was an exciting time in the District for the Momentum program, and he thanked Board members for generously approving the new facility to be built next to Clear Springs to house elements of both the VANTAGE and MOMENTUM programs. He noted that he had asked consultant David Stillman, of New World Ventures, to look at current and possible future opportunities for MOMENTUM, using the lens of a planner and strategic thinker. Dr. Peterson said the goal is for MOMENTUM to be a cutting-edge program and bring our students into the future.

Mr. Stillman then presented his findings to the Board. He noted that there will be three communities that will need to contribute to making MOMENTUM a success: education,

post-secondary, and business. His presentation focused on what these three communities have learned, done, and still need to do relating to MOMENTUM:

### What We've Learned—Education

- Trades are having a moment!
- 83% of tradespeople surveyed said they were satisfied with their careers
- On average, a trade school education costs a total of \$33,000—roughly equivalent to the cost of one year of a college education
- There is a need for almost 370,000 new automotive technicians in 2022
- 70% of construction companies in the US are having trouble finding workers
- Construction managers earn an average of \$95,260/year
- Experiential learning works and is needed
- Not all programs translate—i.e. mentoring program and site visits
- Business partners are paramount to allowing students to see how what they are learning applies to potential careers
- Classes need to incorporate core curriculum and cannot just be electives
- MOMENTUM currently does not have opportunities for post-secondary credits
- MOMENTUM needs to find more “currency” in its program
- Current MN state assessments for the trades are weak
- Minnetonka’s assessments happen too late in the process – should start in middle school
- Students need exposure to the trades—golden opportunity for the District

### What We've Learned—Post-Secondary

- Students that go into post-secondary studies are likely to go to one of six public/private institutions – much easier for partnerships
- Students need to be earning post-secondary credits via articulated credits or even concurrent enrollment
- Teachers will need to be credentialed and/or certified to teach the coursework – golden opportunity for retention

### What We've Learned—Business

- Students who enter the trades are much more likely to stay in their communities
- Wonderful for partnerships - businesses are literally investing in their future workforce
- Finding partners is not the challenge – learning what we need from our partners is the bigger challenge
- Business partnerships look much different in VANTAGE
- Harder to partner with MOMENTUM

### What We've Done—Post-Secondary

- District has 2 teachers credentialed to teach coursework that qualifies for articulated credits
- Actively learning what it takes to credential additional teachers
- Applying for articulated credits at the following institutions
  - Hennepin Technical College
  - Dakota County Technical College
  - Alexandria Technical College

### What We've Done—Business

- Over the past 18 months, we have partnered with the following businesses:
  - Northern Tool and Equipment
  - Habitat for Humanity Twin Cities
  - RJM Construction
  - Automotive Unlimited
  - Feldman Imports
  - Josh Hoyt—Veteran Design Build/Mayor of Farmington
  - Chad Thelen—Thelen Cabinet
  - City of Minnetonka
  - Minnetonka Fire
  - Bonfe Heating and Air
  - MN Department of Labor and Industry
  - City of Excelsior Rotary
  - Built Data
  - Henry Pears—Magney Construction—Dunwoody student
  - Ames Construction
- Construction of an onsite tiny house
  - Students built the home which can then be sold in the marketplace
  - Avoids restriction of students on construction sites
- Grown mini apprenticeships:
  - RJM Construction
  - Hunt Electric
  - Waytek
  - Fenix
  - Twin Cities Orthopedics
  - Park Nicollet Clinic
  - City of Plymouth—Plymouth Creek Community Center
  - City of Plymouth—Firestation #3
  - Audi Minneapolis
- Stackable credentials—in the trades, this is very common—often paid for by employers
- Provide work projects that align with curriculum
- Businesses willing to come and guest lecture to students
- Provide after-school work opportunities

### What We've Done—Education

- Current Pathways
  - Construction Systems
  - Manufacturing
  - Design
- Started an informal search for updated assessments
- TradesHub will create a “Day in the Life” video series for our students that will highlight various careers in the trades
- Focusing on soft skills—extremely important

### New Pathway Identified—Aviation

- Need for private and commercial pilots is skyrocketing
- District is within 30 minutes of Flying Cloud Airport
- Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association has created a HS curriculum that is aligned to Next Generation Science Standards, Common Core State Standards and individual state standards
- By 11<sup>th</sup> grade, students can obtain an official drone license or ground pilot license (still need in-air license)
- Students need 40 hours of flight time within two years to get private pilot's license
- Many students don't finish because they can't afford it or there is no program nearby
- Partnership offer with Flying Cloud Airport and InFlight to provide students 40 hours of flight time at a discounted rate during their senior year capstone experience
- Remaining funds can be sought out by District, parents, and scholarships
- Goal is for students to graduate with their ground and in-air pilot's license

### What We Need to Do—Education

- Build out and plan for aviation track
- Negotiate final arrangements to avoid in-air training challenge
- Apply for scholarships
- Continue to look for opportunities to weave in core curriculum
- Apply and pilot a MOMENTUM class that receives post-secondary articulated credit
- Create a grander strategic plan and budget for teachers to be able to offer articulated credits
- Continue to focus on soft skills
- Find and finalize a new student assessment
- Work with middle schools to move assessment to that level and before high school registration

### What We Need to Do—Post-Secondary

- Pilot an articulated credits class

- Meet with all six institutions to plan for even greater collaboration and training
- Identify as many post-secondary credentialing opportunities as possible
- Build out training and credentialing needs for teachers and identify initial team to be trained

### What We Need to Do—Business

- Continue to nurture current business relationships
- Lock in 3-5 partners (current or new) to follow new partnership criteria for students
- Grow and pioneer the apprenticeship program

In the discussion that followed, Board members were very enthusiastic about the work that had been done thus far, and the possibilities for MOMENTUM in the future. Board member Lee-O'Halloran noted the importance of teaching soft skills and asked what that coursework would look like. MHS teacher Brent Veninga noted that the coursework was currently being built, with certain elements from VANTAGE coursework moving over to MOMENTUM. Mr. Stillman noted that the apprenticeship program with local businesses will play a huge role in this, as those businesses can be asked directly, "what do you need from our students?" Board member Selinger asked about teachers obtaining credentials for the articulated courses, and was told that they will need to complete some coursework to receive those credentials. Board member Ambrosen expressed his enthusiasm for the future aviation strand and his hope that the future facility would allow for aircraft engine repair.

At this point in the proceedings, Mr. Veninga updated the Board on the current MOMENTUM experience. He said that the number of students in the program continues to trend upward, with 755 students currently enrolled. In 2018-19, there were 592 students enrolled. He showed a video of the current students working in the new spaces at the Pagel Center, and said the students were thrilled to have this new space in which to learn. Survey data from the students has also been extremely positive. Nine external events have been offered this year, with over 30 professionals sharing their experiences and expertise with the students. Mini apprenticeships have also been offered at local businesses.

In closing, Mr. Veninga thanked the members of the Professional Advisory Board for their input and assistance with the program. He said the program is in a great position to expand and serve even more students in the future.

### **CITIZEN INPUT**

Chairperson Vitale extended an invitation to members of the audience who wished to address the Board on any topic. No one responded to this invitation to speak.

## **REVIEW OF POLICY 412: EMPLOYEE EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

Executive Director of Finance and Operations Mr. Paul Bourgeois noted that this policy had been established in 2004, and while it was still sound as written and functioning as the Board intended, the recommendation this evening was to increase the daily per diem for meals plus tips from \$50 per day to \$75 per day.

Board members agreed to this change. Chairperson Vitale noted that the policy would be brought back to the Board's regular meeting in April for approval.

## **UPDATE ON DISTRICT BONDS**

Mr. Bourgeois presented this item to the Board. He began by noting that the District periodically issues bonds as needed to fund long-term maintenance projects on its approximately 1,800,000 square feet of building space and 258 acres of land, or to construct targeted building additions as needed to meet the needs of the educational program for the students. When the District was founded in 1952, the district inherited the 1929 Excelsior High School Building – now serving as Excelsior Elementary School – and the 1938 Deephaven High School Building – now serving as Minnetonka Community Education Center. For approximately 16 years inclusive of 1952 with the construction of Minnetonka High School and ending in 1967 with the construction of Scenic Heights Elementary School, the district facilities were built by the populace.

Starting in the middle of the 2000s decade, with all of the buildings approaching or exceeding 50 years of age, the District undertook a strategic initiative to perform mid-life long term maintenance to rebuild the buildings to ready them for another 50-60 years of use. This rebuilding process itself will last approximately 16 years through approximately 2024 before it is completed, with one of the last phases being replacement of original cabinetry in the 1950s areas of the various elementary schools. Subsequent to that, the District will be in more of a continuing maintenance mode as roofing and paving continue annually, HVAC systems which last approximately 30 years come due for replacement, and synthetic turf fields come due for replacement in the years of 2021 through approximately 2026.

In the past several years, the great majority of deferred maintenance items have for the most part been eliminated, with only a few remaining, and the District is on schedule with its long-term maintenance plan to continue to replace major building components for the fleet of buildings that have reached 50 years or more of use. The District also has done targeted additions over the past several years to serve the educational programs in an efficient manner and serve all the students that wish to enroll in the District.

Mr. Bourgeois then provided a status report on the various bond issues of the district, the annual bond payments on the outstanding bond principal, and a look at the current and future levels of outstanding bonds as the District moves through its strategic facility initiatives and bonds are paid off over time. The report also contained additional information regarding the financial and budget history of the District, the course of the

District set by past School Boards, and additional detail on various bond issues, all of which provided additional context to the information about the outstanding par value of bonds outstanding.

### **REVIEW OF VISION DOCUMENT**

The Board continued its review of the Vision document, concentrating on the final pages in the brochure (pages 27-33). Executive Assistant Carrie Voeltz will compile the recommended changes and email them to the Board. The District's Communications Team will then review the document and recommend any additional edits.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Board adjourned the Study Session at 9:23 p.m.

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