



WILLISTON
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

NEWS RELEASE

August 29, 2019

Innovation Academy and Pop-Up Lunch Event

Williston Public School District #1, the Williston Coyote Foundation, and the Moving Forward Matters Committee are fundraising for the Innovation Academy to provide more opportunities and space for students. As enrollment in WPSD#1 steadily increases, the School Board continues to work toward more solutions to reduce class sizes and overcrowding in the schools. One of these solutions is the Innovation Academy.

The Innovation Academy will serve 400 students grades 5-8. Building the Innovation Academy will reduce class sizes for Bakken Elementary and Williston Middle School. The academy will be an example for Personalized Learning across the district, where teachers from all schools can take ideas from the Innovation Academy and see first-hand how Personalized Learning can transform education. The project will also utilize the abandoned Hagan Indoor Pool and convert the Auto Shop/CTE Space to 7,000 usable square feet for Williston Middle School, which will include 5 core classrooms, two elective rooms and a robotics lab.

Superintendent Dr. Jeff Thake states, "Utilizing digital learning tools and relevant, project-based instructional approaches, this academy personalizes education for students by addressing the distinct learning needs, interests, and aspirations of individual students. In this personalized learning environment, the students move from a "one-style-fits-all" approach to student-centered learning."

After failed bond attempts and enrollment on the rise, the School Board is asking the community for help to make the project a reality. The Innovation Academy will be funded by these four sources: Building Fund fund balance, Building Fund bond, Williams County funding, and donations. The total project will cost \$12, and the fundraising goal is \$5 million.

Equinor is sponsoring a pop-up lunch on Friday September 6, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm in Downtown Williston at Hedderich's Lot. We invite the community, families, and business to join us for a free-will donation, delicious lunch! To-go boxes will be available as well. All donations will go toward the Innovation Academy fundraising goal. Equinor will match donations received on September 6, dollar for dollar, up to \$10,000.

For more information and questions, please contact:

Dr. Thake- Jeffrey.thake@willistonschools.org

Joanna Baltés- Joanna.baltes@gmail.com

Codi Austreim- codi.austreim@willistonschools.org

*Submitted by Kaylie Bergel, Communications Specialist
Williston Public School District #1
Kaylie.Bergel@willistonschools.org*