



*A Community of Learners*

## **Informational Memo: School Board Summer 2019 Work – EMFP, Finances, Facility**

TO: School Board

FROM: Dawn Livingston, School Board President  
Trisha Kocanda, *Superintendent*

Date: August 26, 2019

### **Overview**

The School Board approved a comprehensive Educational Master Facility Plan (EMFP) in October 2018, the District's first long-range plan in over 20 years. This process initially began in December 2015 by examining enrollment. The EMFP planning process incorporated the study of facilities and sites, building capacity and utilization, and grade level configuration. It was designed to align school facilities, enrollment, and our vision for teaching and learning to meet the needs of current and future students in a fiscally responsible manner.

Subsequently, the District 36 School Board unanimously approved a \$90.6 million referendum for community vote on April 2, 2019. The community voted on the referendum on April 2, 2019, and the referendum did not pass.

The School Board discussed continued post-referendum planning at its May and June 2019 meetings. The following areas were targeted for School Board summer work:

- **Educational Master Facility Plan:** Review EMFP and clarify priorities and most essential elements for improved clarity.

- **Decision Sequencing & Timeline:** Commit to a multi-year plan to pace necessary initiatives and School Board decisions.
- **Facility Maintenance Plan:** Commitment to build a multi-year plan to address most pressing facility needs.
- **Financial Planning:** Commitment to analyze longitudinal expenditures as compared to enrollment to inform FY20 and future Budgeting processes.
- **Architect Selection:** Select a the new Architect of Record after a multi-month process that began in December 2018.
- **Community Outreach:** Commitment by Board members to increase engagement opportunities with the community to build partnerships, obtain feedback, and address questions/feedback/comments on Board issues.
- **Redistricting 2020:** Development of three options for revised attendance boundaries along with phasing-in options for certain students were developed. A separate memo and presentation is available for this work.

The School Board met multiple times over the summer, in work sessions and subcommittees, to tackle this important work. The dates and meetings were held on:

- June 7, 2019 - Facility Subcommittee
- June 19, 2019 - Special Work Session
- June 20, 2019 - Finance Subcommittee
- July 18, 2019 - Special Work Session
- July 24, 2019 - Finance Subcommittee
- August 1, 2019 - Facility Subcommittee
- August 13, 2019 - Special Work Session
- August 14, 2019 - Policy Subcommittee

This memo is meant to summarize the progress that was made, as many of the outcomes provide the necessary context for August 26, 2019, Board presentation, such as the decisions concerning Redistricting 2020 and FY20 Budgeting.

### Update on Summer School Board Work since June 2019

#### **Educational Master Facility Plan (EMFP)**

The School Board reviewed each component of the approved Educational Master Facility Plan (EMFP) for clarity and alignment with community values. The analysis led to a re-affirmation of the EMFP with a revision of priorities (needs

vs. aspirations) in accordance with community feedback. The Board drafted an EMFP At-a-Glance document to facilitate broader understanding of the plan with the greater community.

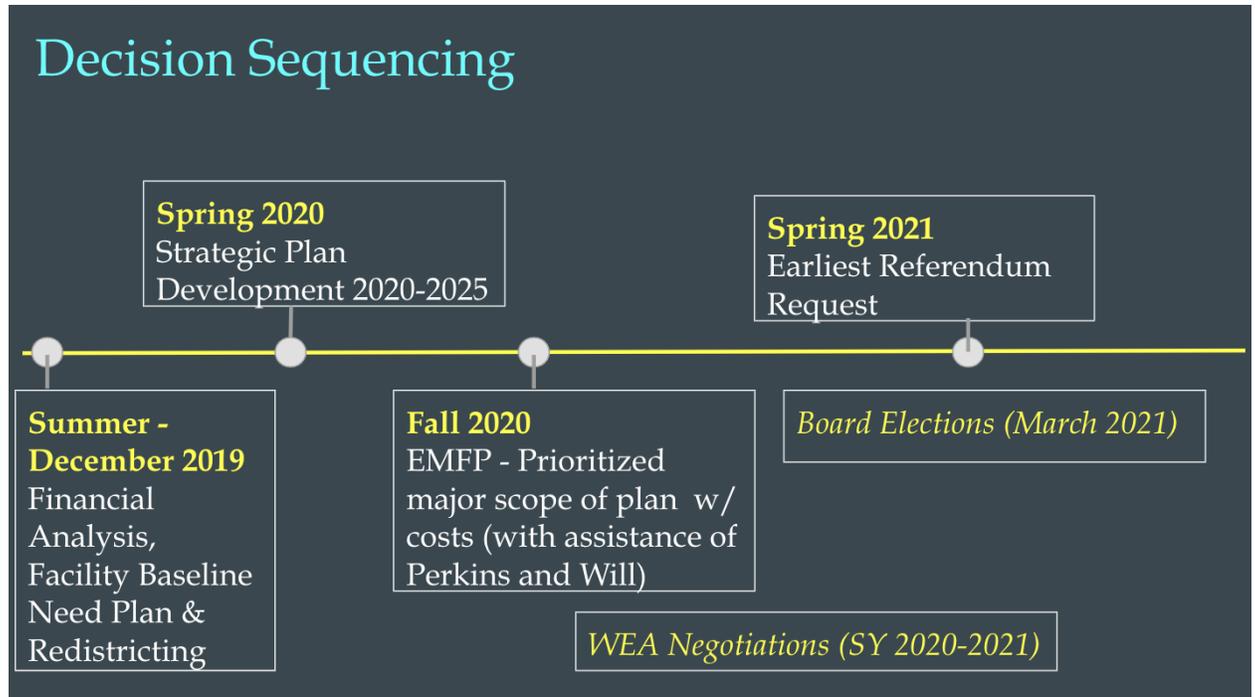
The EMFP At-a-Glance document is available [here](#).

### Decision Sequencing & Timeline

The School Board reviewed all post-referendum feedback from the following sources:

- E-mail responses to [nextsteps@winnetka36.org](mailto:nextsteps@winnetka36.org)
- 2:1 Board facilitated community conversations with those most engaged in the referendum process
- Reports from the 2019 Caucus Survey
- Regular Board communications via email or letters

It was determined that the community would benefit from clarity regarding the sequencing of important decisions that the School Board is facing over the next 2 years. After much discussion concerning community feedback and topics covered in this memo, School Board is committed to working toward the following timeline:



- **Summer - December 2019:** This timeframe will allow the District to align the financial and facility goals with budgeting and levy requests. Considerable time will also be dedicated to the Redistricting 2020 Plan.
- **Spring 2020:** The District's 5-year Strategic Plan sunsets at the close of the school year. It will be important to re-engage staff, parents, and the community with Strategic Priorities for the next three to five years to maximize alignment of goal work with community values.
- **Fall 2020:** By this time, the District will have a great deal of insight from strategic planning and from the renewed perspective of Perkins and Will to determine what the prioritized scope and costs will be in the EMFP and how it may align with another referendum.
- **Spring 2021:** Given the multiple factors described in this memo, it is determined that the earliest the School Board will move forward with another referendum will be in March 2021.

### **Facility Maintenance Plans**

The Facility Subcommittee met in June and August 2019 to review capital projects, merging Health/Life Safety with some of the prioritized "baseline" items from the referendum, such as domestic water piping. The Facility Subcommittee recommended a 3-year plan to address H/LS "A", "B" and critical "C" items, domestic water piping to mitigate lead at all schools, and some prioritized ADA work at Crow Island School. The plan was also developed with the emphasis on closing Skokie School within the next five years, yet addressing critical facility needs to ensure the property remains viable for rental.

Facility Maintenance Plans are laid out over 3-years in order to ensure that we can continue to utilize our facilities for the summer programs that are housed within our schools. This includes our Adventures in Learning and Extended School Year programs, as well as our partnerships with The Winnetka Park District and T.W.I.G.S.

The plan would utilize fund balance amounting to an estimated \$11.2 million over 3 years. This would draw down the District's fund balance to approximately 59% after the completion of the projects. Committing to the Board's plan to earmark any fund balance over 60% of operating fund expenditures, to address Capital Project needs within the District would allow for an estimated \$8.6 million to be moved from Operating Funds to the Capital Project Fund. The remaining \$2.6 million would be paid out of Operating Funds. Details of the plan can be found [here](#).

## **Financial Planning**

Board policy states that the District will target operating costs per pupil at or under a 3% growth rate. During the summer several current Board members met with former Board members involved in the development of this philosophy in order to better understand the rationale behind the parameters that were implemented when this policy was put into place.

The Finance Subcommittee met on June 20 and July 24, 2019, to continue analysis of expenditures over time as they relate to enrollment and set cost per pupil goals for future budgets, aligned with the school board finance policies. The Board utilized the insights from former Board members in the analysis. Administration provided the Board with a 5-year analysis, in addition to the proposed budget.

At the School Board's work session on August 13, 2019, a more in-depth discussion was held with the full board to prepare for the FY20 and FY21 Budgets. At this meeting, the Board made targeted reductions in order to manage the cost per pupil, with the understanding that the biggest cost implications, salary and benefits, will require an adjusted budget timeline. Administration presented a new budgeting timeline that was developed for the FY21 budget development process. The Finance Subcommittee will also work on a programmatic analysis to ensure that there is a better understanding of the cost of each program. The Board also discussed the impact of the prioritized facility maintenance plan on District reserves.

## **Architect Selection**

The School Board, at its work session on August 13, 2019, approved Perkins and Will as its architect of record after a rigorous process that spanned months. The Board also approved a Perkins and Will proposal to evaluate and refine cost and scope within the existing framework of the Board-approved EMFP. Access more board memos on this topic [HERE](#).

## **Community Outreach**

In an effort to enhance our outreach to the community, two D36 School Board Members will be available to meet with community members. Meetings will be held on the **first Wednesday of every other month** (specific dates below) **at Peet's Coffee, 817 Elm Street, in Winnetka.**

Community Outreach Meeting Dates/Times:

Date & Time
Wednesday, September 4th (11-noon)
Wednesday, November 6th (7:00pm-8:00pm)
Wednesday, January 8th (11-noon)
Wednesday, March 4th (7pm-8pm)
Wednesday, May 6th (11am-noon)

These informal meetings are intended to meet the following outcomes:

- Build partnerships with the community
- Obtain feedback from community members
- Address community members' questions/feedback/comments in an informal setting

*Please note that these outreach sessions are not intended to circumvent the District's problem-solving process. This process is detailed on our website:*

<https://www.winnetka36.org/Page/57>

**[Link to EMFP at a glance](#)**