



# MEQUON-THIENSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

CITY OF MEQUON AND VILLAGE OF THIENSVILLE

5000 W. MEQUON ROAD

MEQUON, WI 53092

PHONE (262) 238-8504 - FAX (262) 238-8520

WWW.MTSD.K12.WI.US

Demond A. Means, Ed.D., Superintendent

Eric J. Dimmitt, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

Hughes B. George, Director of Pupil Services

Gail M. Grieger, Director of Business Services

September 19, 2011

Dear Community Member,

The purpose of this letter is to provide some clarification related to District communications.

Recently, some community members have asked some board members and me about the board's use of a communications firm. Specifically, community members have asked if the communications firm is assisting the District and the board in promoting the trimester schedule. The answer is no, the District has not hired a communications firm for the *exclusive* purpose of communicating about the trimester schedule. The allegation that the firm has been hired to communicate to community members about, or somehow try to "sell," the idea of the trimester schedule is false. The District is not exclusively contracting with any communication group to develop a message around the trimester issue.

While it is true that the District does have a contract with a communications firm that assists it with *all aspects* of our communications efforts as a District, the firm will not have any involvement in developing a "message" concerning the trimester issue in the future. The District originally contracted the firm, the Donovan Group LLC, two years ago through a competitive bidding process. Since that time, the Donovan Group has continued to help the District create its annual budget and school performance documents, create and distribute the District and Homestead e-newsletter, draft news releases and create and distribute videos, among other communications-related activities.

Unlike other districts in the area, the Mequon-Thiensville School District does not have a communications-specific staff person, and the amount paid to the Donovan Group LLC (\$29,772 last school year) is significantly less than what a part-time position would cost. The board will formally vote on approving the communication contract for the 2011-2012 school year during the October 31, 2011 Board of Education meeting. Administration and the board communication subcommittee will recommend that the District increase the contract allocation for the Donovan Group this school year to \$36,000. The increase in the contract is in order for the Donovan Group to assist the District in communicating progress made through our strategic planning process, which is tentatively scheduled to start in November 2011.

Much of the confusion related to this issue is from a board meeting where the District's communications efforts were reviewed and board members were updated on progress in this area. It should be noted again that the contract with the Donovan Group does not call for the marketing of the trimester schedule.

Sincerely,

Demond A. Means, Ed.D.  
Superintendent