



The Launchpad to Success 

Statement from MTSD Board of Education President

March 24, 2020

Dear Mequon-Thiensville Community:

In these unprecedented and seemingly ever-changing times, I am writing to the Mequon-Thiensville School District community to share some important updates.

While none of us could have imagined the disruptions that would come from the coronavirus pandemic, the health and safety of our students, staff, and families have been front and center to our work. Moreover, thanks to the outstanding commitment, care, and compassion of our staff, teaching and learning will continue to take place for all of our students. The district is focused on continuing to ensure that health and safety is a top priority for students, employees, and families. We have provided hundreds of meals, laptops and other essential items over the past two weeks and we will continue to do so. We are committed to staying true to our values during these unprecedented times and, while our buildings may be closed, school is still open.

I want to express my sincere appreciation for all our employees, including our educators, staff, buildings and grounds team, administrators, and district partners. I urge all members of the community to send an email to a teacher or staff member. These are our front line workers. Please join us in thanking them.

Over the past several days, I have been asked whether the referendum question the Board of Education approved will still be on the April 7 ballot. The answer is yes. Although these are very challenging and uncertain times, our school district's long-term facility, safety, security and capacity needs remain a top priority. School leaders used a collaborative and data-driven decision-making process to evaluate our district's needs for the next ten years. The school board voted to place a referendum question on the ballot after careful consideration of a rigorous population analysis, the recommendations developed by a Community Task Force, and following review of feedback from a community-wide survey. The proposed project is grounded in facts, data, and input from stakeholders and experts across our community. (Community members can access detailed information and reports online.) We know that the safety, security, facility, and capacity needs for our students will still be there for tomorrow, no matter what happens today.

The board has always been and continues to be prudent stewards of our resources in order to create and maintain the best environment for growth. A strong public school system benefits stakeholders in many ways, and we are proud to contribute to our community's continued vitality where property values remain high and education thrives. At a mill rate of \$7.68/\$1,000 of



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equalized value, our school district's mill rate is significantly lower than the K-12 state average of \$9.37/\$1,000 of equalized value, and lower than 90 percent of K-12 public school districts in the state. We continue to be only one of 3 districts in the state that are Aaa bond rated. We are a financially strong district with a low tax rate. Our school district is an exemplary educational leader, consistently named among the finest schools in the state of Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has reported that MTSD "Significantly Exceeds Expectations" in all of the years the department has produced ratings. These are the hallmarks of our school district—exceptional public education balanced with fiscal responsibility in our community.

With that, we remind community members that, in addition to the referendum, there are a number of other important items on the April ballot. We join leaders in Mequon and Thiensville in encouraging residents to vote absentee. The Wisconsin Elections Commission strongly recommends that anyone planning to vote in the April 7 Spring Election and Presidential Preference Primary request to have an absentee ballot mailed to them. This can be done online until April 2 at <https://myvote.wi.gov>.

While times may be evolving, there is one promise I can make: your school district is strongly committed to upholding our values, staying connected, and ensuring the needs of our students, staff, and families are met now and in the future in the community we serve.

With that, I want to thank you for your support of our schools, the outstanding people who work in them and, of course, our students. Please stay safe.

Sincerely,

Krista Brookman
MTSD Board of Education President