Madison CARES
Spring 2005

TALKING POINTS

2nd Leopold Referendum   23 March 2005

Growth and Overcrowding
➢ This referendum will relieve over-crowding at Leopold (685+ students in building designed for 655).
➢ The south and west sides are experiencing growth.
➢ Most predict at least one more school will be needed on the west side within a very few years.

Costs
➢ This ballot item will seek authority to borrow $14.5 million.
➢ An average homeowner ($205,400 home) will pay $20-$25 a year for 15 years.

The Plan
➢ A second school will be built on the Leopold campus, on land that is already available (no need to spend $1.5 million for new property).
➢ The new school and the existing school will be paired schools.
➢ The new structure will house a school for grades 3-5, with a capacity of 550 students.
➢ The old building will, after some remodeling, hold 550 students in grades K-2.
➢ An 8-classroom addition was made to Leopold in 2002, anticipating a new building (good planning).
➢ The two schools will function as separate schools; each building will have it s own principal and administrative staff.
➢ The two buildings will share a kitchen and a library. There will be two cafeterias with a movable wall between them. Shared infrastructure saves money.
➢ Playgrounds, entrances, traffic flow, and school names will all be separate.

The Process
➢ This plan was originally proposed in 2001 by the Leopold staff, parents and community.
➢ Planning has been underway for four years.
➢ This plan keeps intact Leopold s connection to low-income families, who mainly live within walking distance of the school. If the referendum doesn t pass, many of those kids will have to be bused.
➢ If this fails numerous boundaries will have to be adjusted for other schools on the SW side of the district. The back-up boundary plan has not yet been finalized by the board.

Why vote YES?
➢ This approach is cost-effective.
➢ Avoids 45 minute bus rides for kids who must move to a less crowded building.
➢ Avoids placing more of the busing burden on low-income families.
➢ Avoids disruptive boundary changes for other schools.
➢ Keeps the tight-knit and very diverse Leopold school community together.
➢ Begins solving growth-related problems now; don't wait.