

# ACTIVE CITIZENS FOR EDUCATION

Public Hearing Presentation to  
Long Range Planning Committee of MMSD Board of Education  
January 19, 2005

By law, the members of the Board of Education of the Madison Metropolitan School District are to be held in a fiduciary responsibility to the public in the operation of the schools. As elected officials, this responsibility is expected to be based in trust, confidence and openness to those served.

Trust, confidence and openness are key factors by which the greater Madison community of taxpayers will judge your decisions regarding the promulgation of a referendum seeking tax revenues for future maintenance projects in our schools. Your decisions and communications will be expected to demonstrate that the public can have confidence that:

1. expenditure requests for maintenance
  - a. are an integral and continuous part of the total budgeting process
  - b. show the implications for projected near term and long term revenue shortfalls
  - c. differentiate clearly one-time projects proposed for referendum support from ongoing operations budget maintenance expenditures
  - d. show the potential for seeking taxpayer approval to raise the revenue cap for general operations monies
2. maintenance is an ongoing business expense addressed in the operations budget with expenditures prioritized by using written objective criteria
3. funds allocated for maintenance in the operations budget will be 'held harmless' from reduction and/or re-allocation to other budget line items
4. proposed maintenance projects are considered in relation to proposed and/or actual closing or change of functional status of school buildings or other facilities
5. maintenance decisions are related to purposes which are good business decisions according to established criteria
6. balanced assessment of infrastructure and equipment using actuarial studies of probable useful life combined with appropriate evaluation of the current condition of the systems within the context of same use and/or changed use
7. there are separate categories and prioritization of energy conservation projects; capital projects; and, day-to-day operational maintenance
8. policies are initiated and implemented consistently and fairly with regard to Request for Proposals (RFPs) and for scoring projects for contracting out vs projects for possible completion by in-house staff with follow-up evaluation

9. energy saving
  - a. initiatives are planned and costs are determined in advance
  - b. calculations are delineated and justify the investment and return on investment
  - c. paybacks and savings are accounted for and re-invested in the maintenance program by the district
  
10. accountability for the true costs of management and administration and staffing levels for projects is spelled out in project estimates and final costs

For the District to continue along the same pathway as has been evident the past few years is NOT acceptable. The highly questionable accountability will indeed put the children of this community further at risk. The lack of sound decision-making and poor performance will continue to put more and more homeowners and renters at risk thereby forcing us out of our homes, neighborhoods and the community. The taxpayers of this community have long been abundantly generous in the support of the Madison school system (and we believe will likely continue to be so). There are, however, higher expectations and demands for effectiveness, performance and efficiency within affordable means. Every household in this community is impacted through taxes levied for the schools--over 70% of these households do not have children. We are expecting much better and higher levels of accountability from the policy makers and administrators of the school district.

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