



Guiding Principles for *Building Excellence*

July 2017

The guiding principles are the community voice of *Building Excellence*. We generated these principles from focus groups about facilities with approximately 170 students, staff, and community members throughout the Fall 2016. Research & Program Evaluation Office staff used qualitative methods to analyze this focus group data and determine the values and principles most important to the MMSD community. We then took the draft principles to the community again in Spring 2017, getting feedback to further refine the concepts and create the final set of principles listed here. The district will use these guiding principles over the next 20 years to help prioritize facility-related planning and ensure that facility investments and planning align with the values of the MMSD community.

Prioritize health, safety and accessibility

All facility-related decisions will prioritize the health, safety, and accessibility of MMSD students, staff and community members. The district will incorporate best practices into facility maintenance, planning and construction to ensure these spaces are comfortable and available to all. Facility investments will prioritize critical maintenance and restoration of facilities, so that all facilities meet a minimum building condition index grade.

Promote academic and co-curricular excellence

All MMSD facility-related decisions will ensure that learning spaces support great teaching and help prepare students to graduate from high school ready for college, career and community. To this end, academic and co-curricular facilities should provide teachers and students flexible and effective spaces for teaching centered on innovative, complex and high-level learning.

Adequately and consistently invest in the MMSD facilities

MMSD decision-makers will ensure the district's budget reflects a sustained and adequate investment in facilities. Over the next 20 years, decision-makers will allocate sufficient funding to address routine maintenance in order to prevent critical issues from being deferred and partner with community organizations when appropriate to make upgrades possible. MMSD facilities should outwardly project the district's high expectations for thriving schools in order to promote the retention and attraction of students and staff.

Treat MMSD buildings as community hubs, not just schools

Decision-makers should recognize that MMSD facilities are important centers for the greater-Madison community and ensure facilities can support vibrant programming and community needs. Planning should ensure that facilities can sufficiently support community use so that shared spaces do not interfere with MMSD needs.

Keep equity at the forefront of decision-making

MMSD facility planning and investments should analyze how facility investments will disrupt inequities across the district by ensuring that all students have access to safe, clean, and supportive learning environments. Decision-makers will recognize facility improvements as a key resource and tool to ensure equitable teaching and learning across the district.

Demonstrate a strategic approach to facility investments

MMSD facility-related decisions will draw on the ever-growing database of information and ways of working created during the development of *Building Excellence*. MMSD decision-makers will make financially sound facility investments using Capital Maintenance Plans to prioritize short-term projects and Capital Improvement Plans to address major renovations and new construction. This planning will effectively weigh the costs and benefits of renovations to existing facilities with new construction to ensure that tax-dollars are spent responsibly and will include processes to track and measure progress over time. Input from the facility's users will play a key role in decision-making.