A New Direction

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
"...Change is painful. But nothing is as painful as staying stuck somewhere you don't belong.”

-Mindy Hale
Tonight's Agenda

1. Introduction
2. The Problem
3. The Opportunity
4. The Formal Proposal
5. Open Enrollment
6. Project Scope
7. Project Timeline
8. Project Milestones
9. Estimated Budget
10. Risks
11. Success Criteria
12. Project Financials

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
The Wausau School District wants to be the premier school district for Central Wisconsin! A reputation we will earn for the right reasons, supporting our students and our community.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
What Does it Mean to be the PREMIER School District?

★ Students receive the absolute best education available

★ Students have the most diverse, challenging, and supportive experiences anywhere in the region and state

★ We are the employer of choice for teachers, staff, and education leaders

★ We have the highest-quality facilities, programs, and equipment for students and staff

★ We offer personalized support for families

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Changing Direction

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Changing Direction

In order to be the PREMIERE school district in Central Wisconsin, the Wausau School District must expand programming, improve service to families, and be an employer of choice in Wisconsin. These changes require resource investment. State funding, coupled with declining enrollment, has put our District in a tough situation.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Our Why

A desire to improve service to students, families, and staff through more efficient use of resources.

We are concerned about differences in staff, student, and family experiences based on the school one attends or works in the district. That's characterized by changing enrollment trends and future projections within geographic areas; student achievement, programs and course offerings; co-curricular offerings; staffing challenges; scheduling models; physical space and facilities.
A Difficult Financial Situation

- 22-23 revenue is more than $4 million behind inflationary pace set in 2011!

- That means over the past 11 years, we've lost $25 million!

*IMPORTANT NOTE: In 21-22, the district started receiving $4 million in revenue through a referendum to support pupil services.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Declining Enrollment

- 02–03 Enrollment: about 8,600 students (4K–12)
- 22–23 enrollment: 7,873 students (4K–12)

That’s a drop of more than 700 students over a 20-year period = A decrease in revenue limit authority of about $7 million each year going forward!

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
3.115% increase in full-time equivalent staff.

Decrease in student enrollment between 2015–2022: -7.406%

An inability to match staff to enrollment trends.

- Before 2021, the number of full-time staff was lower (~0.7%) compared to 2015.
- The increase in full-time staff between 2021–2022 was due to the pupil services staffing increase supported by a referendum.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
At the start of 2022–2023 School Year:

239 MORE students open enrolled out to other school districts = $1.97 million in lost revenue

The projected 2028 open enrollment represents $2.54 million in lost revenue!

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Long-Term Concerns That Need to be Addressed Proactively

- Inconsistent student success and access to programming
- Inconsistent staffing across schools
- Inconsistent staff working conditions across schools
- Challenges with attracting and retaining quality staff
- Declining enrollment
- Unfavorable open enrollment trends
- Continued long-term financial challenges

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The Opportunity

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Opportunity: Turning our largest weakness into our strength through consolidation.

Consolidating allows us to reallocate our resources to improve student outcomes, family experiences, and become a more attractive employer.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Guest Speakers

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
What impact will restructuring have on elementary students, staff, and families?

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
**IMPORTANT NOTE**

AGR and Title 1 Schools will retain their status:

Franklin/Hawthorn Hills
Lincoln/G.D. Jones
Grant/Thomas Jefferson

AGR and Title 1 Schools

John Marshall will remain a Title 1 School

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Rib Mountain Elementary Pilot Study

1 Intervention Teacher

The additional academic interventions improved students' skills and decreased the number of referrals for more intensive services like special education.

On the 20–21 state report card, Rib Mountain earned an overall score of 67.1. On the 21–22 report card, their score jumped to 78.4!

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Combining Elementary Schools

- Less travel for staff
- Greater student grouping options
- Greater staff collaboration
- Average class size change of one

Special Education, EL, and Title 1 will maintain their student/teacher ratios.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
The Story: Elementary Student

Students (and staff, too!) will have more support for behavioral and mental health.

Will experience elevated instruction and assessments because larger teacher teams can collaborate.

WIN (What I Need) times are more effective due to increased collaboration and more opportunities for tailored WIN times.

Will get the support they need from specialized staff in real time. Will not need to wait for their teachers to be available.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
What impact will restructuring have on middle school students, staff, and families?

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
The Story: Middle School Student

- Students will experience greater academic opportunities.
- Students will experience greater co-curricular opportunities.
- Greater opportunities for continued skill development.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.

Access to new and expanded career exploration.
What impact will restructuring have on high school students, staff, and families?

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
The Story: High School Student

Equal access to ALL programs! Ex.: Engineering & Automotive classes

You mean I could have access to both AP & IB?! More competitive co-curricular experiences

More access to their teachers (the number of staff who have to travel because they're split across schools will be reduced) Intramural sports opportunities

Access to elevated academic & co-curricular experiences (less duplication & greater investments)

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Our Proposal

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Our Vision

**Elementary PK-4**
- Building Confident Learners & Developing Skills

**Middle School 5-7**
- Continued Skill Development and Exploration

**Junior High 8-9**
- Inspiration and Planning

**Senior High 10-12**
- Post High School Plan Completion
  - "Prepared for Life after High School"

Creating Spaces for Students and Staff to Thrive
Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Elementary School Merger Plan

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Why Are These Schools Merged?
Location & Capacity

Stettin
Enrollment 276
*Capacity 367
(91) 75%

Rib Mountain
Enrollment 206
Capacity 248

South Mountain
Enrollment 369
*Capacity 347
22 106%

Maine
Enrollment 205
Capacity 245
(40) 84%

Riverview
Enrollment 434
*Capacity 471
(37) 92%

Thomas Jefferson
Enrollment 395
Capacity 421
(26) 94%

Franklin
Enrollment 200
Capacity 301
(101) 66%

Hawthorn Hills
Enrollment 310
Capacity 296
14 105%

Lincoln
Enrollment 209
Capacity 284

G.D. Jones
Enrollment 429
Capacity 421
8 102%

John Marshall
Enrollment 181
Capacity 367
(186) 49%

*Includes additional classrooms from 2022 referendum
Elementary School Merger Plan

- Develop more effective facilities for charter schools and other specialized programming
- Pursue further community partnerships to create 2 ‘early learning centers’ for birth to 5 years for staff and community, including 4K and Early Childhood

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Out of School Time Programming (G2M)

★ Extending learning and supports

★ A district merger allows the opportunity to provide G2M programming to more students and at more elementary schools.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Early Learning Centers

- Since the creation of our 4K Academies, there's been a tremendous loss of childcare in our community.
- The Wausau School District wants to be part of the solution.
- Early Learning Centers serve pre-school children from birth to age 5.
- We recommend creating 2 Early Learning Centers by committing two of our newly vacated elementary schools to this purpose.
- High-quality early learning is vital to the success of our children, our businesses, and our community.
- Prepares the District to be ready to offer full-day 4K.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Proposal for a Secondary Restructure

5th Grade Moves into Middle School

Horace Mann & John Muir
Grades 5-7

Reconfigure our 2 High Schools

Junior High School (Grades 8-9)  Senior High School (Grades 10-12)
5th Graders in a Middle School

- Both Horace Mann & John Muir will serve grades 5-7 in a "Team Concept"
- Create a district 5-12 scope and sequence in all content areas
- Recreate the middle school schedule according to previous feedback
- Incorporate required middle school rotations to facilitate exploration
- Support students’ later exploration of electives

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Current Middle School Capacities & Enrollments

**John Muir**

- **Enrollment:** 1,004
- **Capacity:** 1,134
  - (130) 89%

**Horace Mann**

- **Enrollment w/o Montessori:** 683
- **Capacity w/o Montessori:** 1,058
  - (281) 73%
- **Enrollment w/ Montessori:** 777
- **Capacity w/ Montessori:** 806
  - (123) 85%

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Projected Middle School Capacities & Enrollments After Restructuring (Grades 5-7)

John Muir
- Enrollment: 976
- Capacity: 1134
- (40) 86%

Horace Mann
- Enrollment w/o Montessori: 656
- Capacity w/o Montessori: 806
- (123) 81%
- Enrollment w/ Montessori: 750
- Capacity w/ Montessori: 1,058
- (281) 71%

*Develop more effective facilities for charter schools and other specialized programming.
High School Outcomes: Redefining Ready

2021-2022 Report Card for Wausau East & Wausau West High Schools
Dr. Keith Hilts, Superintendent

International Baccalaureate®
Wausau East High School is proud to be one of the International Baccalaureate® (IB) world schools in the United States. The advanced curriculum provides extra credit hours, which are recognized by colleges and universities, allowing students to earn college credits while still in high school.

Technical Education
In addition to having a robust auto-body facility, the Wausau East Technical Education Department has over 100 students enrolled in what is considered to be one of the best technical education programs in the state of Wisconsin. The department provides a wide range of programs to meet the needs of students interested in pursuing careers in the technical field.

College Ready Indicators
GPA (3.0 or Above) - Students with a GPA of 3.0 or above are more likely to be successful in college.

Career Ready Indicators
Work-Based Learning Experience - Students who participate in work-based learning programs are more likely to be successful in college.

Co-Curricular Activities
Wausau East offers a wide array of student-organized co-curricular opportunities. These activities are a great way for students to explore their interests, develop leadership skills, and build a sense of community.

Our Mission:
To advance student learning, achievement, and success.
High School Plan

- Grade 8–9 Junior High & Grade 10–12 Senior High
- All students will have equal access to programming
- By eliminating the duplication of efforts, we can expand and improve programming
  - Expanded grades 5–12 academic programming
  - Expanded grades 5–12 co-curricular opportunities
  - More access to WIAA sports
  - Intramural athletic opportunities
- More balanced workload for staff

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
What are the possibilities?

We can help students become college, career, and life ready by involving them in decision making and the building of enhanced opportunities based on their interests.

- **Academic**
  - Offer additional courses in AP & IB
  - Enhance Pathways (Ex.: Culinary & Health Care)
  - Increase Dual Credit Opportunities
  - Increase Work-Based Learning Opportunities

- **Co-Curricular**
  - Robotics Teams
  - Marching Band
  - Science Olympiad
  - FBLA/HOSA

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Uniting Students and the Community

How we know it will work:

- American Legion Baseball
- Lacrosse
- FFA
- CWETA (Central Wisconsin Educational Theater Alliance)
- Youth Athletic Programs in the Community

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
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Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
The Rationale: Senior High School Location

The Secondary Leadership Team strongly recommends the use of the flex mod schedule.

- Student skill development
- Collaboration & flexibility for staff

To serve as a grade 10–12 senior high, East requires a $38 million investment.

West requires a $10 million investment in a 2-story addition.

Location. West is ideally situated for students to access higher education and work-based learning opportunities. Further, it offers easy access for community partners and other communities.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
The Rationale: Senior High School Location

⭐ Commitment to flex mod schedule for the senior high
⭐ East can't accommodate a flex mod schedule without a significant investment (Approximately $38 million)
⭐ Location near community partners
⭐ West needs additional flexible space to accommodate additional enrollment
⭐ Our proposal is to reallocate $10 million to add 12 classrooms on the front of West
⭐ The $10 million will come from money reallocated from the Montessori addition at Horace Mann/Grant Elementary and other District funds

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Current High School Capacities & Enrollments

West
Enrollment: 1,377
Capacity: 1,694
(317) 81%

East
Enrollment w/o EEA: 863
Capacity w/o EEA: 1,484
(621) 58%

Enrollment w/ EEA: 920
Capacity w/ EEA: 1,584
(664) 58%

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Projected High School Capacities & Enrollments After Restructuring

West
Enrollment: 1,664
Capacity: 1,694
(30) 98%

East
Enrollment w/o EEA: 1,130
Capacity w/o EEA: 1,484
(354) 76%
WAVE, EEA, and Alt are removed from count
Enrollment w/ EEA: 1,184
Capacity w/ EEA: 1,584
(397) 75%
WAVE and Alt are removed from count

*A 2-story addition to West would make the new capacity 1,943.
Senior High School Location

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Project Timeline

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Project Timeline

Target Date to Open Consolidated Schools

- This allows the construction at John Muir and Wausau West to be completed
- See "Project Milestones" for more detail related to the timeline
- The 2025 timeline allows many areas of planning to be completed before implementation of the district restructure. (See "Project Scope")

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
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Measurable Outcomes

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Measurable Outcomes (Draft)

- Equal access to high school programming (academic & co-curricular programming)
- Re-attract 200 open enrolled students (capturing $1.6 million in revenue)
- Expand access to high-quality child care (200 children)
- Increase WIAA sports access
- Create intramural sports program
- Increase resource teachers (1 per elementary school)
- Increase classroom support staff (1 per elementary school)
- Reduce or eliminate 'district-placed' students when schools fill up
  Currently, 60 students are district placed away from their home school
- Possibly add elementary athletics program
- Increase student and parent satisfaction (establish baseline and set 5-year goal)

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Measurable Outcomes (Draft)

★ Save $2 million in operation costs within 5 years
★ Reduce need for future facility maintenance, improvements by $15 million
★ Right size staffing through attrition over 5 years
★ Reduce amount of required travel for staff
★ Increase staff satisfaction (establish baseline and set 5-year goal)

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Plan to Reverse Open Enrollment Trend

- Invest in staff, programming
- Be a more attractive employer
- Better service to families
- Increase revenue
- Reverse open enrollment trend

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Project Budget

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Estimated Project Budget ~$1.38 million
(No additional facility costs)

Items

★★ 1,200 employees investing time during their work day (Average of 4 hours = 4,800 hours)

★★ Secondary curriculum revisions = estimated 8,000 hours (100 staff at 80 hours outside of their workday at $24/hr)

★★ Initial investment into secondary curriculum materials.

★★ Rebranding: (New school name, mascot, uniforms and equipment, signage)

★★ Communications costs: Mailings, etc.

★★ Legal

Approximate Costs

Additional cost = $0
Cost is really in time given

Cost = ~$500,000

Cost = ~$500,000

Cost = ~$106,000

Cost = ~$5,000

Cost = ~$30,000

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Risks

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Risks Associated with a Restructure

- Open enrollment out of the district may increase in the short term
- Staff may choose to leave the district (Important note: Certain segments of our staff are already showing lower retention rates due to working conditions)
- Some bus transportation times may increase
- Additional school transition added to a student's PK-12 career
- Some schools may experience tight enrollments initially
- Some traditions may be lost, replaced, or updated (Example: Log Game)

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Risks if a Restructure is NOT pursued

★ Families will continue to leave the Wausau School District without systemic change
★ Declining enrollment will lead to staffing reductions
★ Declining enrollment will lead to programming reductions
★ Students will continue to have unequal access to programming
★ Some staff will continue to have more challenging working conditions than necessary
★ Revenues will decrease due to declining enrollment
★ Maintenance costs increase to maintain all of our buildings

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Restructuring Project Financials (Sell 2 Schools)

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<td>Student Growth (# students)</td>
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<td>2,830,765</td>
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Restructuring Project Financials (Sell 1 School)

### NON-RECURRING BENEFITS

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<th>2024-2025</th>
<th>2025-2026</th>
<th>2026-2027</th>
<th>2027-2028</th>
<th>2028-2029</th>
<th>2029-2030</th>
<th>2030-2031</th>
<th>2031-2032</th>
<th>2032-2033</th>
<th>2033-2034</th>
<th>10-year Total</th>
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### RECURRING BENEFITS

- **Reduced B&G Maintenance**
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<th>2025-2026</th>
<th>2026-2027</th>
<th>2027-2028</th>
<th>2028-2029</th>
<th>2029-2030</th>
<th>2030-2031</th>
<th>2031-2032</th>
<th>2032-2033</th>
<th>2033-2034</th>
<th>10-year Total</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1,591,117</td>
<td>1,848,707</td>
<td>2,110,200</td>
<td>2,173,321</td>
<td>2,238,521</td>
<td>2,305,076</td>
<td>2,374,846</td>
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<tr>
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<td>200</td>
<td>239</td>
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<td>Student Growth Revenue</td>
<td>243,027</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>255,331</td>
<td>528,428</td>
<td>1,073,027</td>
<td>2,199,705</td>
<td>2,694,363</td>
<td>2,761,722</td>
<td>2,830,765</td>
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### COSTS

- **Staff Augmentation**
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<th>2026-2027</th>
<th>2027-2028</th>
<th>2028-2029</th>
<th>2029-2030</th>
<th>2030-2031</th>
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<th>2032-2033</th>
<th>2033-2034</th>
<th>10-year Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Augmentation</td>
<td>1,203,831</td>
<td>1,239,946</td>
<td>1,277,144</td>
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<tr>
<td>Various Operational Costs (Trans., Ins., Purch. Services)</td>
<td>45,895</td>
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<td>53,204</td>
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<td>56,444</td>
<td>58,138</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary Curriculum Redesign</td>
<td>212,180</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary Curriculum Materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Mascot Design and Uniforms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signage and Branding</td>
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### NET BENEFIT/(COST)

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<th>2026-2027</th>
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<th>2029-2030</th>
<th>2030-2031</th>
<th>2031-2032</th>
<th>2032-2033</th>
<th>2033-2034</th>
<th>10-year Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Final Thoughts

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Every Student Benefits!

Academic support teachers for all students

Enhanced Gifted & Talented opportunities

Enhanced behavioral supports for all students

Expanded and enhanced academic offerings

Intramural sports offerings

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
In Summary: Restructure Includes:

★ One 10-12 senior high at Wausau West
★ One 8–9 junior high at Wausau East
★ Two 5–7 middle schools at John Muir and Horace Mann
★ Eight K–4 elementary schools
★ Appropriate facilities for charter schools and other specialized programming
★ Create "Early Learning Centers" for birth to 5 years for our staff and community
★ Reallocate referendum funds from Horace Mann/Montessori and Grant to create a 2-story addition at Wausau West

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Board Action

A Restructure of the Wausau School District

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
The Motion:

Move to approve the Wausau School District restructuring plan as presented for Fall 2025 implementation.

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.
Thank You!

Improving the experiences for students, their families, and our staff together.