



PO Box 178 • 14189 Ostlund Trail North

Marine on St. Croix, Minnesota 55047

651-409-3122 • Fax 651-538-1022

info@marineareaschool.org • www.marineareaschool.org

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Friday, October 26, 2018

Dear River Grove Parents and Guardians,

As many of you are aware, the River Grove board recently passed a resolution which affirms the board's desire to consider lease opportunities with the City of Marine on St. Croix (see attached). The City of Marine held two community meetings on October 13 and 17 to discuss the potential purchase of the Marine Elementary School property. Members of the River Grove board were present at these meetings to present the resolution, address the city, and answer questions. River Grove board members clearly stated that River Grove was unable to make any commitments regarding a possible move to the Marine Elementary building (split-campus configuration or whole school move), but that it was our desire to explore the opportunities that the Marine Elementary building and grounds has to offer.

After the October 17 meeting, the Marine on St. Croix city council voted unanimously to sign a purchase agreement for the purchase of the Marine Elementary School property. Last night, the Stillwater School Board voted unanimously to sell the Marine Elementary property to the City of Marine. The pending purchase does not bind River Grove, in any way, to moving to Marine Elementary.

The River Grove board has been gathering information related to the Wilder and Marine Elementary facilities. This exploration includes a full understanding of both the Wilder and Marine Elementary buildings and grounds, facility capacities, long-term lease opportunities, and financial implications. Board member Dan Miller and I recently met with the teaching staff to discuss our options and hear their thoughts.

The board will not proceed with facility decisions until we have had a full and robust discussion with our parent, guardian, and staff community. We are fortunate that we have options. We are excited to share the information that we've been able to collect about each facility and to hear your thoughts about the school's future. Please look for a community meeting before the end of the year to start the community dialogue.

As always, you can reach out to board members at any time.

Respectfully,

Lisa White

River Grove Board Chair

lwhite@marineareaschool.org

## **Marine Area Community School Board of Directors Resolution of Interest in Site Expansion Plans in Marine on St. Croix, Minnesota**

RESOLUTION APPROVED AT THE RIVER GROVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, HELD ON OCTOBER 8, 2018 AT 8:30PM AT 14189 OSTLUND TRAIL N, MARINE ON ST CROIX, MN 55047.

Whereas, the founding board of the Marine Area Community School pursued the development of a charter school with the original expectation that the school would be located within central Marine on St. Croix, in order to best serve the needs of Marine on St. Croix families;

Whereas the founding board of the Marine Area Community School recognized the critical importance of keeping an elementary school within the city of Marine on St. Croix, Minnesota;

Whereas a school has existed in Marine on St. Croix for 168 years, and current residents overwhelmingly support the existence of education in their town;

Whereas strong support for a school in Marine on St. Croix was shown during the 2016 fundraising effort, where the community donated approximately \$150,000 to the Marine Area Community School, with a vast majority of funds from non-parent residents of Marine on St. Croix;

Whereas the Marine Area Community School recognizes and values the input and contribution of all members of the school community;

Whereas, the Marine Area Community School included the planned use of the Marine Elementary School building in their original application to the Minnesota Department of Education and in their application to the Minnesota Guild of Charter Schools;

Whereas the founding board of Marine Area Community School intentionally designed the mission, vision, and learning program of the school based on the assets of Marine on St. Croix, including the natural resources, history, arts, and civic involvement of the community;

Whereas the long-term ownership of the current facility in Wilder Forest is undetermined and the Wilder Forest buildings currently used by Marine Area Community School are aged;

Whereas a charter school may not organize an affiliated nonprofit building corporation for the purpose of owning property before it has operated for at least six consecutive years;

Whereas current student attendance at the Marine Area Community School has exceeded the original intent of one class per grade (maximum of 175 students);

Whereas if the current rate of growth of the Marine Area Community School continues, the school will need additional space beyond what is available at the Wilder Forest location in about two years;

Whereas the capacity of the Marine Elementary School building is not large enough to accommodate the Marine Area Community School at its current enrollment level;

Whereas it is the fiduciary duty of Marine Area Community School Board of Directors to steer the Marine Area Community School towards a sustainable future;

Whereas the Marine Area Community School intends to apply to the Minnesota Department of Education for a site expansion as soon as is allowed (when the school has two years of longitudinal performance data available in August, 2019); now, therefore, be it

Resolved, if the City of Marine on St. Croix is successful in completing the purchase of the Marine Elementary School building, and if the Marine Area Community School is successful in their application for a site expansion, and if enrollment continues to grow at the current rate or higher, the Marine Area Community School desires to explore lease options with the City of Marine on St. Croix in order to expand the school to a second site at the Marine Elementary School building.