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The School District of Fort Atkinson took their first official action towards developing a long-range Master Facilities Plan on Tuesday, September 24th, with the first meeting of the recently-formed district's Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC). The FAC task force is comprised of 28 volunteers from various areas of the community - students, community members, parents, business members, alumni, and School District of Fort Atkinson team members. Alongside representatives from CG Schmidt Construction and Plunkett Raysich Architects (PRA), the FAC's mission is to evaluate the facilities needs facing the School District of Fort Atkinson, and present potential facility solutions to the community and full School Board for feedback. These committee members will also serve as an informational liaison to the community throughout the planning process.

At the initial meeting on Tuesday evening, the Committee began by introducing themselves and their initial thoughts on the current state of the District facilities. Many committee members mentioned that they are or have been parents of student-athletes. Because of traveling to away games, they have some insight into facilities at other districts. FAC Committee Member, Vern Zech shared, "I want to help make the facilities themselves better learning environments for both students and teachers, so it is easier for the teachers to teach, and students to learn." Some other comments included, 'We have completed some safety and security projects but (we) may need more in addition to upgrading learning environments.' And, 'We have good things, but we do have things that need improvement.'

Kory Knickrehm and Nicole Leibman volunteered to serve as co-chairs of the FAC. The Committee then reviewed and formalized a committee charter and timeline of the facilities planning process presented by CG Schmidt and PRA. Both CG Schmidt and PRA have already toured the schools and met with the school principals to begin identifying current building deficiencies since the Spring of 2018.

The FAC then reviewed how learning environments have evolved to complement the future workforce that the students will be entering. The School District of Fort Atkinson has been creative with their spaces, with some utilizing flexible furniture to better connect learning spaces to future employment spaces. The meeting concluded with a tour of the Luther Elementary School building. Committee members highlighted some utilization of flexible furniture, security



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cameras, outdated and damaged ceiling tiles due to leakage from the roof, lack of storage, and mechanical equipment that has exceeded its useful life. Josh Carter, Director of Buildings and Grounds, commented, “My team is constantly making updates to all buildings. However, it is more than simply ripping up old carpet and tile. Our buildings are dated, so most of the carpet and tile contains asbestos which leads to proper containment, obtaining permits, and following abatement procedures.”

The next FAC meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 22nd from 6-8 pm at the Fort Atkinson Middle School. If you have any additional questions about the FAC or the facilities planning process in general, please contact Jason Demerath, Director of Business Services at demerathj@fortschools.org or 920-563-7800.



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