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### **East Troy School Board Considers Various Referendum Options**

*Board works to find a solution that balances needs of students, staff, taxpayers*

EAST TROY, Wis. — In a special meeting Thursday night, East Troy Community School Board members reviewed and discussed various options for addressing the district's facility needs and a strategy for engaging community members in the process.

Matt Wolfert of Bray Architects presented a summary of the preliminary options, which focused on addressing the needs outlined in the district's master facilities plan and aligning with district goals. The options ranged from renovating inefficient and outdated educational space to repurposing existing space in a way that better meets students' needs while continuing to improve on safety and security issues throughout the district.

"The fact of the matter is that our school district has a number of facility needs that require our attention right now," said Dr. Chris Hibner, superintendent. "The challenge we face is in finding solutions that address these needs in a way that maximizes their advantages for improved student learning and long-term district costs, while having the least significant impact on taxpayers."

Although the board made no decisions about the options presented, board members did ask Wolfert for additional information, including the feasibility of reusing existing space in the district in a more effective manner. Board members also discussed a referendum to be held in the next year, but did not select any specific dates.

"We must address our facilities to enhance student learning environments and represent long-term planning, while building community support," said Dr. Hibner. "I recognize that facilities are only a segment of our entire educational process, but we must take great pride in them and show that we are a school district that's constantly moving forward."

In addition, board members asked Wolfert and representatives of Miron Construction, its construction management firm, for a process the board could use to engage community members in a more inclusive way to ensure that any solution appearing on an upcoming ballot would have voter support.

"Yours is a district with many facility needs," said Wolfert. "My advice to you is to really engage your community in a sound process to ensure that whatever solution you place on the ballot to begin addressing your needs has a great deal of support."

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