

School Naming Task Force Recommendation Report

Moorhead Area Public Schools • May 12, 2003

Executive Summary

In March 2002, voters in the Moorhead School District supported a bond referendum that will provide for improvements to all district facilities. The district's master facilities plan includes the construction of a new K-5 elementary school and a new 6-8 middle school, the remodeling of Robert Asp and Moorhead Junior High into K-5 elementary schools, additions and renovations at Moorhead High School, and the conversion of Probstfield Elementary School into a district education center for Early Childhood Family Education, Early Intervention Services, Head Start, Adult Basic Education, Community Education and district offices. This proposal is designed to enhance educational effectiveness, create economic efficiency, provide equity, and modernize the district's infrastructure.

As the Moorhead Area Public Schools progresses toward full implementation of the master facilities plan in the fall of 2004, many changes will occur to the current building use. Some buildings will be closed and sold, others will be repurposed and remodeled, and others will be constructed. Each of these buildings currently has a name or will need a name.

As a result of these changes, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Larry P. Nybladh recommended the formation of a School Naming Task Force comprised of student, parent, staff, administrative, School Board, alumni

and community representatives. Members of the School Naming Task Force are Jeanne Aske (co-chair), Lyn Dwyer, Roger Erickson, Bryce Haugen (co-chair), Brad Holschuh, Carol Ladwig, Mark Meister, Matthew Naugle, Jeff Offutt, Denise Paulson, Sandee Rasmussen, Margaret Rousseau, Steve Scheel and Lauri Winterfeldt-Shanks.

The purpose of the School Naming Task Force was to determine and execute a public, participatory process to provide a recommendation to the School Board for school building names. The task force was charged with researching and examining options for naming, including retiring names, reusing names or designating new names for each school facility.

The School Naming Task Force makes the following recommendations:

A. Elementary School in Current Robert Asp Facility

The School Naming Task Force recommends that the renovated K-5 elementary school in the current Robert Asp facility at 910 11th St. N.

Summary of Name Recommendations

Elementary School in Current Robert Asp Facility:

Robert Asp Elementary School

Elementary School in Current Junior High Facility:

Ellen Hopkins Elementary School

New Elementary School:

S.G. Reinertsen Elementary School

New Middle School:

Horizon Middle School

High School:

Moorhead High School

Area Learning Center:

Red River Area Learning Center

District Education Center in Current Probstfield Facility:

Probstfield Center for Education

be named *Robert Asp Elementary School*.

In 1953 Robert Asp began working as a math and science teacher for Moorhead Public Schools. Eventually he became a school counselor. He continued to teach until his death from cancer in 1980. Asp is also known for building the replica Viking ship, Hjemkomst. Robert Asp exemplified qualities of character such as creativity, determination and commitment. He inspired people to dream with imagination and to act with boldness and courage.

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B. Elementary School in Current Junior High Facility

The School Naming Task Force recommends that the renovated K-5 elementary school in the current Junior High facility at 2020 11th St. S. be named *Ellen Hopkins Elementary School*.

Ellen “Nellie” Hopkins graduated from Moorhead High School in 1896. She began her teaching career in Moorhead in 1908. She served as first grade teacher and principal at the First Ward School from 1910 to 1938.

Accounts indicate Hopkins was a wonderful teacher who made sure her students and their families were provided with food, shoes, clothes, and even candy and toys. Hopkins would also transport her students to performances at the high school in her personal vehicle to make sure the students didn’t miss any performances.

C. New Elementary School

The School Naming Task Force recommends that the new K-5 elementary school at 14th Street and 40th Avenue South be named *S.G. Reinertsen Elementary School*.

S.G. “Steve” Reinertsen served as superintendent of the Moorhead schools from 1926 to 1955. During his tenure as superintendent, six school facilities were built. Reinertsen also helped establish the school lunch program by hauling vegetables from garden plots to schools and carrying food debris from the school kitchens to the dump in the

country. Reinertsen is regarded as a pioneer in the field of teacher benefits, leading the development of group insurance for teachers, and working to improve the Minnesota teachers’ retirement fund. He was a visionary leader who consistently demonstrated the value of service above self. His leadership helped create the solid foundations for excellence upon which the Moorhead School District has grown.

D. New Middle School

The School Naming Task Force recommends that the grades 6-8 middle school at 3601 12th Ave. S. be named *Horizon Middle School*.

The metaphor, horizon, represents the dawn with the sun rising on the horizon just as the middle school students will be at the dawn or beginning of the next stage in their education and their lives. The dawn with the sun rising on the horizon illustrates the bright future and all that is ahead of these young students. Horizon Middle School will be the place where students of all backgrounds from three elementary schools will come together to expand their knowledge — or their horizons — by learning and studying a variety of subjects and participating in new activities.

E. High School

The School Naming Task Force recommends that the grades 9-12 high school at 2300 4th Ave. S. be named *Moorhead High School*.

Moorhead High School reflects the community in which the school is located and is how the school is commonly known among most

present and past students. The word “senior” can be omitted from the name of the high school since the school district is implementing the middle school model and will no longer have a junior high school.

F. Area Learning Center

The School Naming Task Force recommends that the district’s alternative program remain *Red River Area Learning Center*. Red River Area Learning Center reflects the regional nature of the program and the program’s Area Learning Center status.

G. District Education Center in Current Probstfield Facility

The School Naming Task Force recommends that the district education center in the current Probstfield facility at 2410 14th St. S. be named the *Probstfield Center for Education*.

Randolph Probstfield valued lifelong education, and the Probstfield Center for Education will be home to educational programs ranging from those for infants and young children to those who are adults. Probstfield was one of Moorhead’s earliest settlers and in 1881 was instrumental in building the first school for District 23.

H. Disposition of Current School Names

The School Naming Task Force recommends that a commemorative display of historical artifacts be located at the Probstfield Center for Education to honor and recognize the history of the school district, its facilities, and the many students, staff members and community members connected to the schools.