

School Naming Task Force Recommendation Report

Moorhead Area Public Schools

May 12, 2003

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I. Background

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 to 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, staff, administrative, School Board, parent, alumni and citizen representatives (Appendix A). The Community Task Force approach, which involves community collaboration and consensus building for its decision-making process, would be used. Representatives interested in being selected for the task force would submit the Member Selection Form (Appendix B). The School Board Chair, Superintendent and Superintendent's Advisory Council, comprised of representatives from the schools' Parent Teacher Advisory Councils, were authorized to select the members of the task force.

Members of the School Naming Task Force are:

Jeanne Aske, co-chair	Carol Ladwig	Sandee Rasmussen
Lyn Dwyer	Mark Meister	Margaret Rousseau
Roger Erickson	Matthew Naugle	Steve Scheel
Bryce Haugen, co-chair	Jeff Offutt	Lauri Winterfeldt-Shanks
Brad Holschuh	Denise Paulson	

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.

II. Introduction

The 14 members of the school district's School Naming Task Force began meeting Feb. 6, 2003, to determine a public process for gathering community input into the names of the district's facilities. The task force named Jeanne Aske and Bryce Haugen as co-chairs.

To complete its charge, the task force met approximately every other week in February and March and weekly in April. Presentations at the February and March meetings provided background information for task force members to consider during their discussions. The presentations covered the early history of Moorhead, information about local historical figures, the design of the two new schools, decision making and consensus building, and the district education center. Presentations on historical figures provided the task force with information on Ada Comstock, Randolph Probstfield, Robert Asp, Ellen "Nellie" Hopkins, Loren Douglas Hagen, James Sharp, Eleanor Rushfeldt and S.G. Reinertsen. Task force members also conducted additional research about individuals in the community.

At the beginning of the process, the School Naming Task Force determined guidelines for the consideration of school names (Appendix C). Guidelines that the School Naming Task Force considered during the naming process were to name the schools after a person, a place, a symbolic metaphor, or a combination of the above.

Possibilities included naming the schools for famous Americans or individuals who made significant local contribution to public education. Place names include geographic names, the street, road or other geographic feature where the school is located, or the community or neighborhood in which the school is located. A symbolic name could reflect the positive values of the school, the district, the community, the region or the country.

Once the guidelines were determined, the School Naming Task Force developed School Name Suggestion Forms to seek input from the community regarding names for the district's buildings (Appendix D). Suggestions could also be submitted through the school district's Web site. Suggestions were taken beginning February 24 through March 10, 2003.

During the submission period, 228 suggestions were received. Suggestions were divided into the categories "All Buildings/Any School," "District Education Center in Current Probstfield Building," "Moorhead High School," "New Middle School," "All Elementary Schools/Any Elementary School," "Remodeled Elementary School in Current Robert Asp Building," "Remodeled Elementary School in Current Junior High Building," and "New Elementary School" (Appendix E).

After the suggestions were gathered from the community, the task force began determining the criteria to use for naming each school. To select the criteria (person, place, symbolic metaphor or a combination), the task force members used a consensus decision-making process. Each member chose the criteria for a name that he or she thought was best and then paired up with one other person to discuss each person's selection and reach consensus between the two. Next, the group of two met with another group of two and consensus was reached between the four. Finally, the small group picked a representative to present their selection and reasoning to the entire task force and the task force came to consensus.

This method was used to determine the criteria to use in selecting a name for the elementary schools, middle school, high school and district education center. Criteria selected were:

Elementary Schools	Name of person with local historical significance
Middle School	Symbolic metaphor
High School	Location
District Education Center	Name of person with a description of the building function

After determining the criteria for the names of the buildings, the task force members began discussion of the names for each facility. Following additional research and discussion, the task force completed its charge.

The School Naming Task Force provides the following findings and recommendations regarding the names of the district's school facilities.

III. Recommendations for Facility Names

A. Elementary School in Current Robert Asp Facility



Robert Asp School
910 11th St. N.

- Original construction: 1958
- Latest addition: 1999

Current Use: Serves students in grades 5-6. Originally was North Junior High.

Future Use: School will be remodeled and renovated as a K-5 elementary school.

Recommendation:

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



Robert Asp

Rationale:

- The School Naming Task Force established the criteria that the three elementary schools would be named for local historical figures.
- 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. His colleagues and former students report that Robert Asp was an outstanding teacher and counselor who had a heart for his students.
- Asp is known for building the replica Viking ship, Hjemkomst. The ship was sailed to Norway in 1982 after Asp's death. Asp accomplished the project against great odds and in the face of terminal illness. His achievements extended beyond the community and region to the nation and the world. The dream that inspired Asp became a dream shared around the world.
- Robert Asp exemplified qualities of character such as creativity, determination and commitment. Asp inspired people to dream with imagination and to act with boldness and courage. Asp built the ship to honor his forefathers who dreamed of a new land. By building the Hjemkomst, Asp revived their legacy of dreaming big dreams and living them out with boldness and courage.
- The School Naming Task Force recommends that a curriculum about the history of Robert Asp be developed for K-5 students attending the school to learn about the school's namesake. The task force also suggests that the development of a motto using a metaphor be considered for the school.

B. Elementary School in Current Junior High Facility



Moorhead Junior High School **2020 11th St. S.**

- Original construction: 1958
- Latest addition: 1993

Current Use: Serves students in grades 7-8.

Future Use: School will be remodeled and renovated as a K-5 elementary school.

Recommendation:

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 Hopkins

Rationale:

- The School Naming Task Force established the criteria that the three elementary schools would be named for local historical figures.
- Ellen “Nellie” Hopkins graduated from Moorhead High School in 1896 and from Moorhead Normal School in 1898.
- Hopkins 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. By all accounts Hopkins was a wonderful teacher who regularly demonstrated her caring and concern for her students.
- Hopkins made sure her students and their families were provided with food, shoes, clothes and even candy and toys. To make sure her students wouldn’t miss any performances at the high school, Hopkins would load her students into her own vehicle and transport them herself.
- Hopkins died in 1950.
- The School Naming Task Force recommends that a curriculum about the history of Ellen Hopkins be developed for K-5 students attending the school to learn about the school’s namesake. The task force also suggests that the development of a motto using a metaphor be considered for the school.

C. New Elementary School



New Elementary School 14th Street and 40th Avenue S.

- Opening fall of 2004

Future Use: School will serve students in grades K-5.

Recommendation:

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.

Rationale:

- The School Naming Task Force established the criteria that the three elementary schools would be named for local historical figures.
- S.G. “Steve” Reinertsen served as superintendent of the Moorhead schools from 1926 to 1955, the longest period a superintendent had held the office. During his tenure as superintendent, Reinertsen played a key role in the construction of six school facilities — four elementary schools, Central Junior High and a music addition to the high school.
- Reinertsen was also instrumental in helping 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.
- Reinertsen was a visionary leader who consistently demonstrated service above self. His leadership helped create the solid foundations for excellence upon which the Moorhead School District has grown.
- Reinertsen died in 1965.
- The School Naming Task Force recommends that a curriculum about the history of S.G. Reinertsen be developed for K-5 students attending the school to learn about the school’s namesake. The task force also suggests that the development of a motto using a metaphor be considered for the school.



S.G. Reinertsen

D. New Middle School



New Middle School

3601 12th Ave. S.

- Opening fall of 2004

Future Use: School will serve students in grades 6-8.

Recommendation:

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

Rationale:

- The School Naming Task Force determined the criteria that the middle school would be named using a metaphor.
- 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 also represents the place where students of all backgrounds from three elementary schools will come together.
- Middle school is a time when students are expanding their knowledge — or their horizons — by learning and studying a variety of subjects and participating in new activities. Horizon represents the new knowledge and world view to be gained by the students.
- The horizon of Moorhead was a key consideration as the architects designed the school. This newly constructed school is set on the east edge of current Moorhead. Its location is symbolic in that the morning rising sun will first rise over this school. The symbolism also represents the dawning of a new day in Moorhead School District history.
- The City of Moorhead logo reflects the concept of horizon, with the bottom portion of the logo a shade of green to represent the area's rich farm fields and the top half a vibrant blue to represent the area's wide open skies. Horizon Middle School represents the relationship of the schools to the community.

E. High School



Moorhead Senior High School 2300 4th Ave. S.

- Original construction: 1966
- Latest addition: 1999

Current Use: Serves students in grades 9-12.

Future Use: School will be remodeled and renovated with the addition of a ninth grade center, student commons and fieldhouse.

Recommendation:

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

Rationale:

- The School Naming Task Force selected location as the criteria for naming the high school.
- Moorhead High School reflects the community in which the school is located.
- 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.
- In the common conversation of most present and past students, the high school is referred to as Moorhead High School.

F. Area Learning Center



Red River Area Learning Center **1100 32nd Ave. S.**

- The school district leases space in this privately owned building for this alternative learning program.

Current Use: Serves students in grades 5-12 in alternative education settings and through independent study options.

Future Use: This separate site program will remain. Middle school level students will be served in classroom areas at the new middle school.

Recommendation:

The School Naming Task Force recommends that the district's alternative program remain Red River Area Learning Center.

Rationale:

- Red River Area Learning Center reflects the regional nature of the program and the students from around the region who are served through the program.
- Red River Area Learning Center identifies the program's Area Learning Center status.

G. District Education Center in Current Probstfield Facility



Probstfield Elementary School 2410 14th St. S.

- Original construction: 1965
- Latest addition: 1993

Current Use: Serves students in grades K-4.

Future Use: School will be converted to a district education center for Early Childhood Family Education, Head Start, Early Intervention Services, Adult Basic Education, and offices for Community Education, district programs and district administration.

Recommendation:

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**

Rationale:

- The School Naming Task Force determined the criteria that the district education center would be the name of a person with a description of the function of the building.
- Probstfield Center for Education reflects the variety of programs that will be provided at the facility. The center will contain Early Childhood Family Education, Head Start, Early Intervention Services, Adult Basic Education and offices for Community Education, district programs and district administration.
- Randolph Probstfield was one of Moorhead's earliest settlers. Probstfield received his formal education in Germany and could read, write and speak five languages. One of Probstfield's aspirations was to teach his own children to pursue knowledge. With no school in the area, Probstfield held classes for his five oldest children. Probstfield did succeed in giving his children a love of lifelong learning. Four of the girls were teachers, and several of the boys attended an academy for business.
- In 1881, Probstfield was instrumental in building the first school for District 23. Probstfield valued education, and the Probstfield Center for Education, with learners of all ages, will honor this early Moorhead resident.
- The School Naming Task Force recommends that a curriculum about Randolph Probstfield be developed for all K-5 students in the district so students can learn about this important early settler and participate in learning opportunities in connection with the Probstfield Living History Farm.

IV. Disposition of Current School Names

Recommendation:

The School Naming Task Force recommends that a commemorative display of historical artifacts be located at the Probstfield Center for Education.

Rationale:

- A commemorative display of artifacts (i.e., building photographs, narrative history, other icons) will honor and recognize the history of the school district, its facilities, and the many students, staff members and community members connected to the schools.
- By locating the display at Probstfield Center for Education, the items will be at a centralized location. The display would be accessible to the community for visitors and alumni to learn about and remember the important and significant past of the Moorhead Area Public Schools.

V. 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 School and Moorhead Junior High to K-5 elementary schools, an addition and renovation at Moorhead High School, and the conversion of Probstfield Elementary School into a district education center for Early Childhood Family Education, Head Start, Early Intervention Services, Adult Basic Education, Community Education and district offices.

These facilities are designed to span the needs of preschool, school-aged and adult learners and are central to the district's goals of enhancing educational effectiveness, creating economic efficiency, providing equity in programs and services, and modernizing the district's facilities.

As the school district begins implementing the master facilities plan, 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. To determine names for each of the district's facilities, a School Naming Task Force with student, parent, staff, administrative, School Board, alumni and citizen representatives was formed.

On Feb. 6, 2003, the fourteen members of the School Naming Task Force convened to begin a decision-making process to gather community input into the school names, research possible school names, and reach a consensus for school name recommendations. The recommendations presented in this report by the School Naming Task Force recognize the significant changes occurring to the school district's facilities and reflect the Moorhead Area Public Schools' efforts to create a more positive future.

The School Naming Task Force worked to determine facility names that will serve the school district into the future.

The School Naming Task Force acknowledges the connection to and the support of the community by naming Moorhead High School after the community. The task force recommends maintaining the name Red River Area Learning Center to reflect the regional nature and area learning center status of the district's alternative program.

In its name suggestion for the middle school, the task force emphasizes the district's positive future as it works to implement a plan to create educational effectiveness. Horizon Middle School not only represents the dawn or new beginning for students entering middle school, but it also represents the bright future of the school district as the master facilities plan and educational enhancements are implemented.

The names suggested for the three elementary schools recognize and honor local figures who have contributed significantly to education in the school district. A former teacher and counselor who worked for the district from 1953 until his death in 1980, Robert Asp's contributions to the community and his qualities of character make him an inspiration to young students. Robert Asp Elementary

School will continue to recognize Asp’s ability to dream and his commitment and dedication.

A former teacher and principal at the First Ward School, Ellen “Nellie” Hopkins worked for the district from 1908 until 1938. Upon her retirement, the First Ward School was named in her honor. Hopkins is known not only for the care and concern she had for her students, but also the care she had for their families. Hopkins would host parties and picnics for her students and their families and gather donations of food, shoes and clothes as well as candy and toys for them.

A long-time superintendent of the school district, S.G. “Steve” Reinertsen played a key role envisioning growth in the community and the need for new schools. Six school facilities were built between 1926 and 1955 when Reinertsen served as superintendent. His leadership helped create the solid foundations for excellence upon which the Moorhead School District has grown.

<p>Summary of Name Recommendations</p> <p>Elementary School in Current Robert Asp Facility: Robert Asp Elementary School</p> <p>Elementary School in Current Junior High Facility: Ellen Hopkins Elementary School</p> <p>New Elementary School: S.G. Reinertsen Elementary School</p> <p>New Middle School: Horizon Middle School</p> <p>High School: Moorhead High School</p> <p>Area Learning Center: Red River Area Learning Center</p> <p>District Education Center in Current Probstfield Facility: Probstfield Center for Education</p>
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The district education center will be named in honor of an early settler of the community who valued lifelong learning for himself and his children. Randolph Probstfield aspired to give his own children the love of knowledge, and he was instrumental in building the first school for District 23 in 1881. Probstfield Center for Education will be home to programs serving the community’s youngest residents as well as programs for adult learners. Probstfield’s contributions to the community will be recognized at a site where education and learning for all ages will be the focus.

The School Naming Task Force wishes to thank the Moorhead School Board for giving us the opportunity to be a part of this historic process. Thank you to the many community members who took the time to contribute their school name suggestions. Special thanks goes to the following presenters: Mark Peihl, Sandee Rasmussen, Bob Loeffler, Dr. Paul Dovre, Ted Rozeboom, Lauri Winterfeldt-Shanks, Bryce Haugen, Jeanne Aske and Roger Erickson. The task force also wishes to thank Dr. Larry P. Nybladh, Superintendent, and Pam Gibb, Communications Coordinator, for their work in facilitating the process.

It is our hope that the names we have submitted will provide symbolism and honor to the namesakes, places, and metaphors upon which they are based. It is our desire that generations of students will find knowledge, values and inspiration within these schools.