

# Manitowoc Public School District CONNECTION

MANITOWOCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG



## Lincoln High School Celebrates 100 Years of Learning and Tradition



Photo courtesy of the Manitowoc County Historical Society

On a chilly Monday morning, January 25, 1924, 925 students began classes at Manitowoc Lincoln High School, newly built on scenic Roeff's Hill along the shores of Lake Michigan. The new school, with its Gothic-style architecture on 19 acres designed by landscape architect Jens Jensen, was the pride of Manitowoc, Edward Ehlert wrote in "The History of Manitowoc's Secondary Schools." The day before the school opened, an article in the Sunday edition of *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* said:

"A massive pile it is, dominating the entire city of some 19,500 residents, perched on the top of the highest prominence overlooking the lake at the southern extremity of the city and visible for miles to the southward and westward. A great tower, illuminated at night with indirect lighting, shines forth like a lighthouse over land and lake."

Former Wisconsin Gov. Francis E. McGovern said at the time that the new high school "reminded him of the tower of the Cathedral at Antwerp," a massive Roman Catholic church in the Belgium port city in Europe, according to the *Journal Sentinel*.

In 2017 *Architectural Digest* called Manitowoc Lincoln the most beautiful public school in Wisconsin, noting its "ornate, Gothic-style tower which can only be climbed during special tours."

As Lincoln celebrates its 100-year anniversary over the next year, MPSD wants to honor the rich traditions, programs and people at the home of the Shipbuilders (Ships). Plans for an all-years alumni reunion are in the works. If you would like to help with celebrating or planning events, please fill out this form: [bit.ly/MPSDEventForm](https://bit.ly/MPSDEventForm). #ShipsPride #WeAreMPSD

## Japanese Student Trip Builds Bonds

Over the span of a lifetime, 10 days is just drop of water in a bucket.

But when that droplet is a homestay in Kamogawa, Japan, living with Japanese students and their families, it causes a ripple effect that forever changes students' perspectives of the world.

For the first time in four years, the Summer Student Exchange Program is back – and it's the program's 30th year anniversary. Led by the Manitowoc International Relations Association (MIRA), the program allows six Manitowoc area youth to travel to the Japanese port city on the Pacific Ocean for

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## Artist Gives Back With Murals

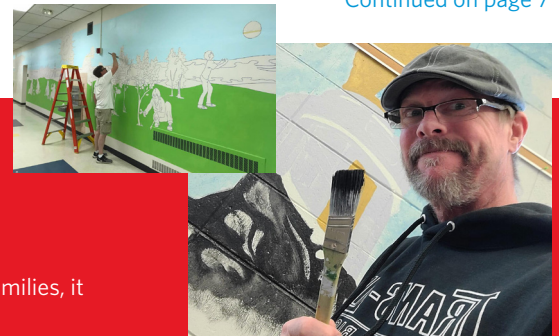
Chad Beeman can still vividly picture some artwork that decorated his childhood schools in Manitowoc.

"When I see old artwork it brings me back," he said. "That's something you carry with you for the rest of your life."

Now Beeman is making memories for future generations of students as he paints large murals at Madison and Jefferson Elementary and starting this summer, at Washington Middle School.

Technically, the murals started about a year before Beeman took a job as a maintenance worker/groundskeeper for

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# APRIL 4, 2023 OPERATING REFERENDUM

MANITOWOC PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

[manitowocpublicschools.org/referendum](http://manitowocpublicschools.org/referendum)



## RAISE ALL SHIPS: Referendum would help ALL schools and ALL students

The greater Manitowoc area is truly a wonderful place to raise a family and MPSD adds so many great opportunities for our youth to learn, grow and thrive. MPSD has a rich tradition of providing expansive academic, arts and athletic opportunities. MPSD supports not only students' academic achievement and college, career and life readiness, but also their social-emotional learning and mental health and wellness.

### But like many districts, MPSD is being tightly squeezed by:

- a two-year freeze in state per-pupil funding
- the cost of inflation on goods and services
- pandemic learning loss and the expiration of federal emergency relief funds (ESSER)
- consumer price index (CPI) impact on staff compensation
- growing competition with other districts and the private sector to retain and attract the best teachers and support staff

And unlike many districts, MPSD is also squeezed by its designation as a low-revenue district. In 1993 when the state imposed revenue limits on all public school districts, MPSD was locked in at a lower level than many other districts. Without changes to state school funding formulas, the only way MPSD can maintain our existing K-12 programming is to seek community support of operational referendums.

Our community generously approved referendums in 2015, 2018 and 2021 and we are once again seeking support. Without that support, MPSD will face steep deficits which will force us to cut staff and programs. A projected \$5.2 million deficit in the first year would translate to about 40 full-time staff members across all buildings, along with great reductions in other expenses.



## THE NEED

### How Will We Spend the Money?

If successful, the referendum funds will be used to:



Maintain a wide range of academic courses, programs and services for all students



Provide competitive wages/benefits to attract and retain highly qualified staff



Address annual, ongoing maintenance on our aging buildings



Update technology infrastructure and implement a computer and related devices replacement system



Cover rising inflationary costs on goods and services, including transportation, utilities, insurance, supplies and equipment

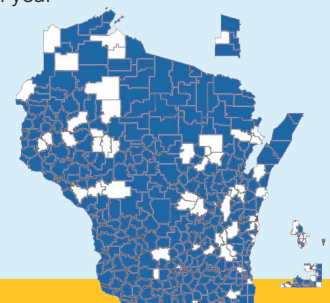
## THE SOLUTION

### How Much Are We Seeking?

We are seeking funds to maintain our programs and services. Guided by our strategic plan, we will use funds for ongoing academic, technology and school maintenance needs to be a destination district with high student achievement. The referendum seeks to exceed state revenue limits in these amounts to balance the budget and meet community expectations:

- \$5,200,000 for the 2023-2024 school year
  - » This would be an addition to the \$4,300,000 voters approved in 2021, bringing the 2023-2024 total to \$9,500,000
- \$11,000,000 for the 2024-2025 school year
- \$13,000,000 for the 2025-2026 school year
- \$15,000,000 for the 2026-2027 school year
- \$17,500,000 for the 2027-2028 school year

MPSD is not alone in this struggle: more than 80% of Wisconsin's 421 school districts have sought referendum approval over the past five years. In 2022 alone, there were 92 operating referendums to maintain programming.



# Strong Schools = Strong Community

As it has since 2015, MPSD's operating referendum remains a critical funding source for students to achieve and succeed. These supports (highly effective and certified teachers, counselors, updated curriculum, technology and extracurriculars) are also a significant reason why families and businesses choose this area over other areas to locate.

**We have a revenue problem, not an expenditure problem.** Over the next five years, we are projecting the district's cumulative general operating expenses will increase by less than 10% total or 2% annually (\$73 to \$80 million). The state funding formula does not cover these modest increases.

Referendum funds would help maintain academic and extracurricular programs and student services including social/emotional and mental health and retain and attract staffing needed to provide them (estimated \$5M in salaries, \$5.6 M health insurance, \$475,000 benefits); improve student achievement with updates to curriculum (\$200,000), technology (\$700,000) and facilities (\$500,000); and pay rising transportation (\$265,000) and utility costs (\$300,000).

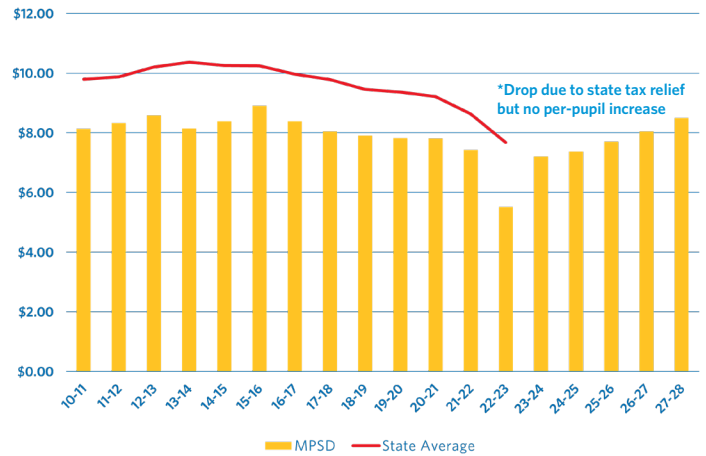
## What is the Tax Impact?

### THE COST

MPSD's tax rate has gone down in each of the last seven years, even after voters approved referendums in 2015, 2018, and 2021. If approved, the five-year operating referendum would increase the school property tax levy rate from its 38-year record low but keep the rate through 2027-2028 lower than it was in 2015-2016.

Over the past six years, the declining MPSD tax rate has resulted in a **\$340 savings** on a \$100,000 home. If the April 4 referendum is approved, a \$100,000 home would see a \$299 increase over five years: \$169 + \$17 + \$33 + \$34 + \$46 = \$299. However, these projections are fiscally conservative and **actual MPSD tax rates have been lower than projected in each of the past eight years.**

## Tax Rate History: MPSD and State Schools Average



## Projected MPSD Tax Rates

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
<b>Tax rate*</b>	\$7.42	\$5.51	\$7.20	\$7.37	\$7.70	\$8.04	\$8.50
<b>Change in rate</b>		-\$0.39	-\$1.91	\$1.69	\$0.17	\$0.33	\$0.34
<b>Impact on \$100,000 home</b>		-\$39	-\$191	\$169	\$17	\$33	\$34
<b>Impact on \$200,000 home</b>		-\$78	-\$382	\$338	\$34	\$66	\$68

\*Actual MPSD school property tax rates 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. Projected MPSD school property tax rates 2023-2024 to 2027-2028

## One of the Lowest Tax Rates in the State

The MPSD takes pride in being fiscally responsible and has been a low-spending school district for more than two decades. MPSD's school property tax rate remains the **second-lowest in Manitowoc County and among the lowest in the state.** MPSD's rate for 2022-2023 is \$5.51 per \$1,000 of equalized property value, compared to the county average rate of \$6.51 and the state average rate for K-12 districts of \$7.68. MPSD's \$13,995 per-pupil funding ranks in the lowest 4% out of 420 WI districts.



## Mark Your Calendars to Vote!

- In-person at the polls on Election Day April 4, 2023
- In-person before Election Day at your municipal clerk's office
- By absentee ballot via [myvote.wi.gov/Vote-Absentee-By-Mail](https://myvote.wi.gov/Vote-Absentee-By-Mail)

## Learn More



[manitowocpublicschools.org/referendum](https://manitowocpublicschools.org/referendum)



[referendum@mpsd.school](mailto:referendum@mpsd.school)



[tinyurl.com/mpsd-referendum23](https://tinyurl.com/mpsd-referendum23)





# Japanese Exchange Program (Continued From Cover)

10 days - this year, July 20 to 30. Then they return home with their Japanese peers who live with their Manitowoc families for 10 days.

Kelly Meyer, chair of the program, served as a host family when his daughter became one of the approximately 180 students who have participated since 1995. "This is life changing," he said recently on WOMT. A couple years after the exchange, his daughter's friend returned to Manitowoc for a full year.

These are our kids, we refer to them as our kids," he said. Fifteen years after another MPSD student traveled to Japan, she got married and her long-distance pen pal flew to the U.S. to attend her wedding.

To participate, students have to write an essay and provide two letters of recommendation. They are interviewed and six are chosen. The cost is about \$2,300 including flight and sightseeing tours. Financial aid is available. Before the trip, students learn about Japanese culture and some basic language.

Students explore mountains and ocean, see shrines and temples, visit Sea World, shop, surf and learn origami. Most importantly, they experience normal daily life in the city with a population similar to Manitowoc. Likewise, Kamogawan peers visit landmarks such as Lambeau Field, the Wisconsin Maritime Museum and Lake Michigan beaches. All students learn that while their cultures have differences, they also have much in common.

# MPSD Works to Raise Reading Scores and Student Achievement

Starting in fall 2023, all MPSD elementary and middle schools will use a new reading curriculum and whole school reform model called Success for All. The goal is to raise MPSD's reading proficiency and other state standardized test scores. The program also aims to improve attendance, behavior, family engagement and other systems to lift overall student achievement.

Like their peers in the state and nation, MPSD students are declining in reading and other tests. On last spring's Wisconsin Forward Exams, only 29.3% of MPSD K-12 students were reading at grade level, compared to 37% statewide and 31.8% at Roncalli Catholic Schools. This means more than 70% of students were not reading at grade level.

MPSD Superintendent Jim Feil said the district's results over the past five years are unacceptable and an urgent problem that needs swift action to ensure students have the skills needed to succeed through graduation and beyond.

"The problem is with our curriculum, it is not with our teachers!" Feil said. "We have a truly outstanding faculty, including National Board Certified staff, and I have full confidence that our teachers, support staff and administrators have the ability to turn this around."

Teachers will attend training April 10 and staff committees are working through implementation, staffing, scheduling, facilities and a supplementary writing curriculum. Families are invited to review SFA materials at two open houses on Thursday, March 30 at 5 p.m. and Saturday, April 1 at 9 a.m, both at Central Office, 2902 Lindbergh Dr.

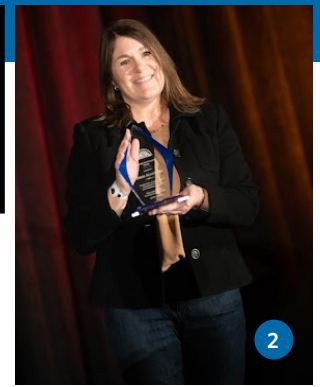


# Student & Staff Spotlights

1. **Melanie Shimek:** Shimek, a Lincoln High School Business & Technology and College Here & Now IT/web development teacher, was honored as the recipient of the 2022 Education Impact Award from the Chamber of Manitowoc County.
2. **Terri Augustine:** Called an innovative “catalyst” for her school community, Wilson Middle School Counselor Terri Augustine was the first-ever recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Wisconsin School Counselor Association.
3. **Mary Beth Dixon:** Lincoln Girls Volleyball Coach Mary Beth Dixon was inducted into the Wisconsin Volleyball Coaches Association Hall of Fame after nearly 900 wins and two state championships under her leadership.
4. **Pom at State:** The Team took 10th place at State D1 Pom, with Kalina Chiu and Riley Johnson on the D1 All-State Team.
5. **Wrestling at State:** Emjay Neumann finished second at the Individual Wrestling State Tournament, with Amellia Fowler also competing.
6. **FCCLA at State:** Allee Bende, Lizzy Leikam and Laci Kitzmann advanced to the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America State competition in April. The three had the highest regional scores in Interior Design and Sports Nutrition.
7. **History Day:** Callie Goetz, Olivia Rabitz, Tor Seilheimer and Jackie Dramm will compete in April at the State National History Day Competition, “Frontiers in History: People, Places, Ideas.”
8. **Josh Moreau:** LHS Business & Technology Teacher Josh Moreau was honored as a recipient of the 2022 Next Generation Personal Finance Distinguished Educator Award. This award was achieved by only 26 Wisconsin Teachers.



Melanie Shimek



## Board Adopts 3-Year Strategic Plan

The MPSD Board of Education approved a three-year Strategic Plan (2023-2025) that sets district priorities and goals, plus strategies to measure and achieve them. See the plan at [manitowocpublicschools.org/strategic\\_plan](https://manitowocpublicschools.org/strategic_plan). The District will add key performance measures by fall 2023.



**Student Success:** Reach, challenge and prepare every student for success, through academic capacity and social emotional development, for success in school and life.



**Student Culture:** Foster a responsible, caring, and inclusive culture that prepares students for a positive and productive life through development of interpersonal skills, relationships and a commitment to the community.



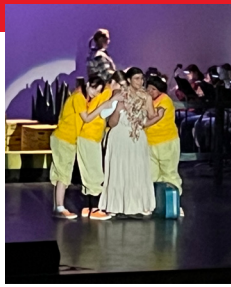
**Workforce Engagement:** Recruit, develop, support, and retain effective educators, staff, and school leaders through investment in all employees, encouraging innovation, and celebrating success.



**Infrastructure & Funding:** Champion the needs of MPSD and be responsible stewards of the public’s investment.



**Stakeholder Relationships:** Produce meaningful communication, foster collaboration, and develop relationships with all stakeholders to build trust across the school community.



## MSPD Highlights Fine Arts

**"Creativity takes courage" - Henri Matisse**

Creativity in the fine arts - music, art, dance and theater - can boost students' self-confidence, improve focus and even increase academic achievement, studies show. MSPD students, from kindergarten to high school, are showing tremendous creativity and courage on stage and on canvas. The community can enjoy that artistic talent in coming months:

- Lincoln High School is hosting a Fine Arts Fest March 27 and 28 at 6 p.m. in the Auditorium, featuring music, art, literature and forensics performances.
- The [Rahr-West Art Museum](#) is filled with MSPD K-12 artwork for its Youth Art Series exhibit, which is open through April 2.
- In February Lincoln theater students performed the musical, Honk, a retelling of "The Ugly Duckling."
- Choir, band and orchestra concerts are scheduled throughout April and May. (See musical schedule here: [sites.google.com/mpsd.school/mpsdmusic/calendar](https://sites.google.com/mpsd.school/mpsdmusic/calendar))



### ART

MPSD's free exhibition at the Rahr-West Art Museum features nearly 1,000 works from painting, ceramics and sculpture to printmaking, collage, fibers, digital media, photography and animation. Congratulations to this year's Mayor's Choice Award winners:

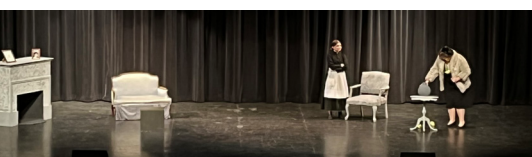
- Elementary School Winner: Issac Patino Avila at Jefferson
- Middle School Winner: Norah Peters at Wilson
- High School Winner: Kenji Yang at Lincoln



For almost 40 years students have participated in a billboard design contest to advertise the art series. This year's winners are Lincoln students Rhyce Thomas and Lilly Wiesner and honorable mention to Zylia Kleinfeldt. See the billboard heading south on North 10th Street.

### MUSIC

Bravo to middle/high school orchestra teacher Ms. Hrudik whose article "Energizing Young Players: Creative Ideas to Inspire Beginners" was published in the February American String Teacher, a national scholarly journal for teachers. Hrudik shared MSPD elementary orchestra teacher Mrs. Woller's lessons and materials to engage beginning musicians.

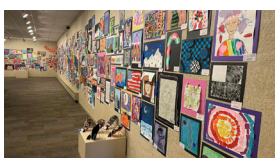


In May 72 middle and high school students will perform at the State Solo and Ensemble; at the regional event 145 students performed. Parents of student musicians: the MSPD Music Parents Association invites you to join the group. The next MPA meeting is April 3 at 6:30 p.m. at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum. Learn more at [facebook.com/mpsdmpa](https://facebook.com/mpsdmpa).

### THEATER

Lincoln High School theater students in October performed two one-act plays, The Omelet Murder Case by Tim Kelly and The Cell Phone Rings for Thee by Werner Trieschmann. The cast and crew of The Omelet Murder Case brought home five awards from the State Theatre festival at UW-Whitewater:

- Tech Award - Charis Wendell
- Directing Award
- Acting Award - Hailey Stasiek
- Critic's Choice
- Acting Award - Ian Zabel



**"The day is an empty canvas, the shapes and colors are yours to choose." - Alex Noble**



## Artist Gives Back (Continued From Cover)

Manitowoc Public School District in 2021. But really the projects began when he fell in love with art as a student, thanks to MPSD art teachers like Russ Larson and the late Ron Stokes.

"They were big mentors of mine," he said. After Beeman graduated from Lincoln High in 1989, he pursued art and graphic design, getting a diploma from The Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale. He later returned to Wisconsin and started working as a machinist and heavy fabricating manager, while always creating and freelancing his art.

In 2006, the same year he earned an OSHA Safety "Forklift Train the Trainer" certificate, he also earned an Associates Degree in Applied Arts from the Milwaukee Area Technical College. His LinkedIn career profile has an interesting dichotomy of skills: "strong background in graphic design, fine art, equipment and machine operations."

He started seeing more murals and decided to try that. "I always jump at new projects," he said. "I like the challenge. No, I haven't done that yet. But yes I can."

His first large mural project was at Strand Adventures. His childhood friend Mike Howe was turning the former theater into a family activity center. "He said 'just go nuts.'" Beeman put in almost 200 hours into wall art.

His artwork and murals now can be seen all around town, from restaurant/bars to the Lincoln Park Zoo where he painted a metal peacock with donor names and then a mural for the cougar exhibit. He sells oil paintings. He is illustrating a children's book series with author June Paris. He is painting a series called "Behind the Curtain" for the MantyDance studio. Beeman also is in his second term as a Manitowoc city alderman.

When his second son was at Madison Elementary in 2019-20, Beeman told the principal it would be "pretty cool" to do some mural work at the school. She agreed. Beeman asked students to draw what they wanted on a long hallway wall. "I tried to take their thoughts and upgrade them but still keep their concept so they could say, 'Hey! That was my idea!'"

Shortly after, COVID hit and the schools shut down. Beeman was able to get in there and work. His wife Shannon and son helped. When students returned, they helped paint the wall and Beeman did cleanup and final detail. Then he took a job working maintenance for MPSD and was persuaded by Jefferson Elementary Principal Courtney DeArmond to create a library mural. When he walked into the library and saw a Ron Stokes abstract cityscape on the wall, "it was like my whole life came flashing backward. I remember it from when I was there. It was amazing to see."

Beeman has put almost 100 hours of work into drawing and painting local, state and national monuments on the library walls. Now he is adding world monuments.

Cajoled into a third project by Washington Associate Principal Lisa Delsman, this summer Beeman will start drawing urban street art on an outside wall of the middle school. Like always, he starts by sketching on a tablet or free-hand, then will project his image on the wall to draw and detail it. Like Madison, he hopes to have Washington students and maybe even parents help paint it next year.

"I always wanted to give back," he said. "These students and staff members down the road will remember this stuff. I know I do."





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## 4K Registration Open - New 5-Day 4K/TK Options

**NEW:** Great news for MPSD students and families! Half-day 4-year-old kindergarten (4K) will be in session 5 days per week, Monday through Friday, starting in fall 2023. MPSD is also offering limited full-day 4K options for qualifying families. Children must be age 4 on or before September 1st of the school year they are enrolling. To enroll, call 920-686-4777. Our 4K sites are MPSD Riverview Learning Community, 4400 Michigan Ave; Lakeshore Child Care Center, 3400 Division St.; and YMCA, 205 Maritime Dr. Wrap-around childcare services also are available.

**ALSO NEW:** MPSD also will be offering Transitional Kindergarten (TK) for students who are not developmentally ready for Kindergarten... yet! Children may be recommended for TK if they did not successfully complete a full year of 4K, are recommended for TK by a 4K teacher, or if they turn five between March 1 and September 1, 2023.

In Transitional Kindergarten, students will learn essential literacy, math and self-regulation skills in a play-based environment. At the end of TK, students will be recommended for either Kindergarten or 1st Grade based on their readiness. Visit [bit.ly/K-TK](https://bit.ly/K-TK) for more information!

## STAY CONNECTED | #ShipsPride

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[manitowocpublicschools.org/schools](https://manitowocpublicschools.org/schools)

The Manitowoc Public School District does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability.



## 2023 Lincoln Athletics Wall of Fame

Congratulations to the 2023 inductees to the Lincoln High School Athletics Wall of Fame: Ron Blomberg, Alyssa DeZeeuw, Gary Dickert, Frank Granitz, Richard "Dick" Hall and Dale Haupt. Read more at [lincoln.manitowocpublicschools.org](https://lincoln.manitowocpublicschools.org).