



WILLISTON
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

INNOVATION ACADEMY

Goal: Raise \$5million to support renovation of the old Hagan pool building into an innovation academy for 5th-8th grades and turn 7,000 square feet of old auto shop space into core classrooms and a robotics lab for the Middle School.

Purpose: WPSD#1's enrollment continues to increase and we need more space! The old Hagan pool is not in use and the building is in good condition. By filling in the pool and adding a second floor, we can turn a pool into a school to accommodate 400 students. That reduces the population of students in core classes at the Bakken Elementary and Williston Middle School.

Benefits: WPSD#1 has embraced personalized learning for students in grades K-12 over the past year in recognition that a "one size fits all" approach to education does not provide the best student outcomes. All students are unique in their interests, their learning styles, and their learning pace. The renovated pool building provides a wonderful opportunity to design a learning environment that supports and enhances the delivery of student-centered learning. Large, collaborative settings combined with smaller break out spaces promote project-based learning, self-pacing, working in multiple subject areas, opportunities for collaborative team work, and cross-curricular teaching. Teachers, staff, and administrators will be able to visit the innovation academy to observe how personalized learning can be implemented.

Innovation Students: During the 2019-2020 school year, the Bakken Elementary will continue a personalized learning pilot for 5th and 6th graders. For the Fall 2019 academic year, 5th and 6th grade students will be placed in the pilot based upon teacher recommendations. For the opening of the innovation academy in the Fall of 2020, students from 5th, 6th, and 7th grades will be selected based on an application process. 8th grade students will be added in the Fall of 2021. Criteria for the application will be developed throughout the pilot project in the Fall of 2019 and will be available in Spring of 2020. Just as not all students learn best in a traditional setting, not all students learn best in a personalized learning environment. Therefore, teacher recommendations and parent input will be considered in determining which students attend the innovation academy for their core classes. Students in the



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innovation academy will participate in music, band, physical education, and other electives at the Bakken or Williston Middle School. Peer tutoring, small group instruction, one on one instruction, and tiered interventions will be available for students in the innovation academy. The curriculum in the innovation academy is the same curriculum followed by Bakken Elementary.

Personalized Learning Throughout the District: The Innovation Academy is not the only place where personalized learning is taking place! WPSD #1 has embraced personalized learning for students' grades K-12 and we are taking significant steps to identify key areas to implement personalized learning. The first task of our district was to become 1:1 with Chromebooks. Beginning in the Fall of 2019, students in grades K-9 will have access to 1:1 technology. Many classrooms throughout the district are piloting components of personalized learning by allowing students to work at their own pace. Teachers have incorporated learning Menus to allow for this across the district. Menus help guide students and teachers to plan short term and long-term academic goals based on the needs of the individual student. We will continue to expand our pilots throughout the district as we work toward a K-12 continuum of personalized learning. We had a very well attended Summer Symposium, where teachers were able to acquire micro-credentials such as Google Classroom, The Daily 5, and the incorporation of learning Menus. Additionally, teams of educators from WPSD #1 visited the most cutting-edge personalized learning school districts in the country on 4 different occasions to see what personalized learning looks like and incorporated many of the structures they observed into their classrooms and grade-level teams. Site visits, along with our annual Summer Symposium will allow more educators opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become well-versed in a personalized learning environment.

Timeline: Significant funds will have to be pledged by mid-August for the School Board to be able to authorize construction on the project to move forward in time to be completed by the Fall 2020 school year. The current building fund balance is not sufficient to cover the \$13.8 million needed for the innovation academy and CTE space renovation at the Middle School.



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Long Term District Strategy: Our number one goal is to increase capacity throughout K-12 to accommodate our increased population. The innovation academy will add 400 seats to that capacity and reduces the number of seats that we will need to create in the future. The design features used in the renovation provide maximum flexibility for future uses of the building. At a cost of \$12 million, the renovation of an existing asset provides significant cost savings over new construction and the purchase of land. Finally, the project re-purposes an obsolete building that may otherwise fall into disrepair.

Donations: All donations are accepted and can be made through the Williston Coyote Foundation, a nonprofit organized, registered 501(c)(3) entity through the IRS. <http://willistoncoyotefoundation.com/>. Please designate your donation "innovation academy".

More Information: Please visit our website at: <https://academy.willistonschools.org/home> To schedule a presentation on the academy and/or discuss sponsorship opportunities, please contact School Board President Joanna Baltes at Joanna.baltes@gmail.com, Superintendent Dr. Jeff Thake at Jeffrey.thake@willistonschools.org, or Codi Austreim, Executive Director of the Coyote Foundation at codi.austreim@willistonschools.org