



Menasha Joint School District

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MENASHA, WISCONSIN

Menasha is located in east central Wisconsin on the northern shore of Lake Winnebago, Wisconsin's largest inland lake. Joined by the cities of Kaukauna, Little Chute, Combined Locks, Kimberly, Appleton, and Neenah, the seven cities form a group called the Fox Cities.

The Fox Cities have historically had a manufacturing-based economy, with such local industries as paper, graphic arts, flexible packaging, processed foods, and iron and brass castings. The Fox Cities are also a prominent insurance, financial services, and retail center. Although dominated by the paper industry, diverse job opportunities exist throughout the region, spurring tax base growth. Wealth levels, which have outpaced the state average, attest to the district's economic health.

Health care facilities in the Fox Cities include three hospitals. A strong public school system consistently exceeds national and state averages in measures of performance. At the higher education level, the community is served by three institutions-the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley, Lawrence University, and Fox Valley Technical College.

The arts are important to the citizens of the Fox Cities. Five museums, two symphony orchestras, and a range of other visual and performing arts offer residents many cultural opportunities.

Recreational offerings are another key asset of the area, and Wisconsin's climate and diverse natural resources invite a wide array of activities. During the summer months, camping, picnicking, biking, hiking, swimming, boating, and fishing are very popular. Winter offers skating, ice boating, and cross-country skiing.

The Menasha Joint School District consists of the City of Menasha, the Town of Menasha and a portion of the City of Appleton east of Little Lake Butte des Morts. The 12 square mile school district has a population of approximately 25,000.

DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Administration

The Board of Education is the policy-making body of the Menasha Joint School District. The seven members elected at large by the citizens of the district serve without pay for staggered three-year terms. Regular meetings are held semi-monthly, on the second and fourth Mondays, and are open to the public.

Other board functions are carried out through four standing committees- Curriculum, Finance, Personnel, and Planning and Properties.

The administrative staff of the public school system is headed by a superintendent of schools who is responsible for general administration, board and community relations, personnel policies, budget control, instructional programs and overall coordination. The superintendent is selected by the Board of Education.

The superintendent is assisted at the central office level by a director of business services, a director of curriculum and instruction, a director of special services, and a director of technology. As their titles imply, these staff members assume major responsibilities for the educational programs and support services of the district.

Daily school operations and instructional leadership are the responsibilities of the building principals. Menasha has five elementary principals, one middle school principal and an assistant principal, and a senior high principal and two assistant principals. Leadership in the instructional program, supervision of employees, and overall direction of students are the major responsibilities of these administrators. Principals report directly to the superintendent of schools. Assistant Principals report to the Principal. In addition, a part time activities coordinator reports to the high school principal.

There are approximately 250 teachers employed by the Menasha Joint School District and about 100 secretarial, custodial, kitchen and other support staff members.

To assist the board in determining policy, citizen input is invited and citizen advisory committees are utilized to do in-depth studies.

Curriculum

The mission of the Menasha school system is to provide a pre-kindergarten through grade 12 educational program through which students acquire knowledge and skills that equip them to be life long learners and productive citizens.

A comprehensive standards-based curriculum development plan for all disciplines was initiated in the 1998-99 school year. Each discipline is developing K-12 content and performance standards that will have embedded in them the 4th, 8th, and 12th grade State standards. Curriculum committees align our local standards with various assessment devices and with the Dimensions of Learning.

There are five elementary schools, one middle school and one senior high school in the Menasha District. The instructional program is organized on a pre-kindergarten through grade 5, grade 6 through grade 8 and grade 9 through grade 12 basis. In the instructional program, objectives are geared to meeting the individual needs of pupils and are aimed at achievement of standards based results.

Elementary

Students concentrate on basic skill studies in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Specialists in art, vocal and instrumental music, physical education, foreign language, guidance, and library study skills enhance students' learning. Special programs are provided for gifted/talented students and for students with special educational needs.

Middle School

Maplewood Middle School provides a transitional program for grades 6-8 students. Students concentrate on basic skill studies in reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies and courses in art, vocal and instrumental music, foreign language, and physical education are broadened. Beyond these basics, seventh and eighth graders expand their educational experience into areas of family and consumer education, technology education, and computer literacy. Students are further encouraged to participate in a wide range of co-curricular activities including student government, journalism, music, art, athletics, public speaking, dramatics, and service organizations. Special programs are provided for gifted/talented students and for students with special educational needs. Guidance services are also a key component of the middle level program. In 2000-2001, a charter school with an environmentally based curriculum was established for 40 middle school students.

Senior High School

Menasha Senior High School continues the district's emphasis on academic achievement. The broad curriculum provides learning opportunities for students of all ranges of ability including advanced placement for college credit.

Co-curricular activities play an important role in the high school experience. Complementing the strong academic program are vocal and instrumental music, student government, journalism, forensics, debate, athletics, cheerleading, pom pon, and service organizations. Special programs are provided for gifted/talented students and for students with special educational needs.

A developmental guidance program based on the belief that guidance and counseling services should be provided for all children at all grade levels is provided.

Financial Support

Menasha's public school system is organized as a unified school district. Revenues to support the educational program come primarily from local property taxes and aids from the State of Wisconsin with lesser funding from the federal government.

Salaries and fringe benefits are competitive for the Fox River Valley.

Technology

The District has a student outcomes driven technology plan that dedicates 1% of the operating budget to technology expenditures. This has allowed us to install a state of the art Wide Area Network (WAN) that connects all of our buildings with fiber optic cable, and all of our classrooms with high speed ethernet. We have placed networked computer labs in every building as well as networked computers in every classroom. This has provided us with the means of handling student instruction, online attendance, and district communications from any point within the district.

Facilities

Every attempt is made to provide school buildings, which will facilitate the varied educational programs and accommodate pupils moving into the district or transferring from local schools.

Each school has its own library-instructional materials center. Through this facility, students have access to a wide variety of information sources.

Each elementary school has a fully equipped computer lab for implementing the district's computer curriculum. The middle school has two fully equipped computer labs, while the senior high has five fully equipped computer labs. All schools have additional computers to be used in individual teacher's classrooms.

Student Population

District enrollments are quite stable with slight growth in a given year being the norm. Pre-K through grade 12 enrollments began the decade of the 1990's at 3,323 and for the 2000-01 school year are 3,678.