



River Trails

SCHOOL DISTRICT 26

To: Board of Education
From: Ryan Berry
Date: June 10, 2025
Subject: Microgrid Installation

Introduction

As part of the Renew America Schools Grant, the District will purchase a microgrid to store and distribute electrical energy at Indian Grove Elementary. In February, the Board reviewed initial placement recommendations, and following the Board's direction, the administration has continued to evaluate alternative locations.

Recommendation

The committee is requested to bring forward a recommendation for Board approval of the microgrid location, including installation costs not to exceed \$200,000.

Background

The original preferred location, in the southwest corner of the property, was found to require substantial soundproofing due to the noise generated by the battery storage system. Based on this analysis, the recommended location has been revised. The microgrid is now proposed to be installed behind the gymnasium storage area, on the west side of the building. This new location is preferred for several reasons:

- It is away from playgrounds, minimizing student safety concerns
- It is not adjacent to classrooms, reducing potential disruptions
- Noise impact on neighboring homes will be negligible
- It does not interfere with Park District field use
- It allows flexibility for potential future construction

Financial Impact

Final costs are currently being calculated and are expected to be available by the June 10, 2025 Board meeting. Preliminary installation costs for the originally proposed southwest location at Indian Grove were estimated at \$177,920.

Because the larger solar panel array will be located at Indian Grove, housing the microgrid at that site is the most cost-effective option. While the distance from the battery storage to the electrical room may be slightly longer, the increased ability to offset energy usage will quickly compensate for any added cost. The Renew America Grant, now totaling \$1,294,660, includes \$200,000 designated for electrical contractor services to install the microgrid and battery storage. The grant is expected to fully fund the microgrid project and contribute \$467,160 toward the solar panel installation at Indian Grove.

Timeline and Next Steps

If approved, a majority of the electrical work will be completed by the electrical contractor during summer construction.