MOODY'S
INVESTORS SERVICE

Rating Action: Moody's assigns Aa1 to MATC, WI's GO notes; outlook stable

19 Oct 2020

New York, October 19, 2020 -- Moody's Investors Service assigns a Aa1 rating to Milwaukee Area Technical College District, WI's (MATC) $1.5 million General Obligation Promissory Notes, Series 2020-21E. We maintain the Aa1 rating on the district's outstanding general obligation unlimited tax (GOULT) debt. Following the sale, the district will have $139.5 million of outstanding GOULT debt, all rated by Moody's. The outlook is stable.

RATINGS RATIONALE

The Aa1 rating reflects the district's strong financial position bolstered by recent operating surpluses. The rating also incorporates the district's large and diverse tax base encompassing the greater City of Milwaukee (A1 negative) region, modest socioeconomic indices, limited revenue raising flexibility, modest debt burden, and moderate pension burden.

We regard the coronavirus outbreak as a social risk under our ESG framework, given the substantial implications for public health and safety. The coronavirus crisis is not a key driver for this rating action. We do not see any material immediate credit risks for MATC. However, the situation surrounding coronavirus is rapidly evolving and the longer term impact will depend on both the severity and duration of the crisis. If our view of the credit quality of the district changes, we will update the rating and/or outlook at that time.

RATING OUTLOOK

The stable outlook reflects our expectation that the district will maintain financial operations in line with the current rating through prudent management of expenditures, which is critical given the district's limited revenue raising flexibility and trend of declining enrollment.

FACTORS THAT COULD LEAD TO AN UPGRADE OF THE RATING

- Significant improvement in resident demographic profile

- Enhanced budgetary flexibility that could arise from growing enrollment or relaxed statutory restrictions on raising local revenue

FACTORS THAT COULD LEAD TO A DOWNGRADE OF THE RATING

- Weakened demographic profile or deterioration of the district's tax base

- Narrowed financial reserves

- Growth in the district's debt or pension burden

LEGAL SECURITY

Debt service on the district's general obligation debt, including the current notes, is secured by its pledge to levy a designated property tax not limited by rate or amount.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Proceeds will finance various building remodeling and improvement projects.

PROFILE

Milwaukee Area Technical College District is one of the largest technical college systems in Wisconsin (Aa1 stable), providing vocational education to residents of Milwaukee County (Aa2 stable), the majority of Ozaukee County (Aaa stable) and small portions of several other surrounding suburban counties.

METHODOLOGY

The principal methodology used in this rating was US Local Government General Obligation Debt published in July 2020 and available at https://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBM_1230443. Alternatively, please see the Rating Methodologies page on www.moodys.com for a copy of this methodology.

REGULATORY DISCLOSURES

For further specification of Moody's key rating assumptions and sensitivity analysis, see the sections Methodology Assumptions and Sensitivity to Assumptions in the disclosure form. Moody's Rating Symbols and Definitions can be found at: https://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC_79004.

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Regulatory disclosures contained in this press release apply to the credit rating and, if applicable, the related rating outlook or rating review.

Moody's general principles for assessing environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks in our credit analysis can be found at https://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC_1133569 .

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