

Journey to the Future/The Road Ahead
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated March 12, 2020

Winneconne Community School District
Questions and Answers about Facilities Planning Process/Community Survey

Why Now?

It is a responsibility of the Board of Education and administration to be good stewards of the community's schools. This includes providing an excellent educational program like the one offered in the Winneconne Community School District, and proactively and effectively maintaining its buildings and providing facilities appropriate for the requirements of today's learners. Currently, the Board of Education and administration are in the process of exploring options to accommodate growing enrollment and aging facilities.

What is the problem?

The elementary and middle school have aging building systems, school capacity issues, increasing enrollment growth, and are in need of improved educational spaces. The high school is in need of maintenance of that is typical of a 20 year old building.

In 2018, to better understand projected enrollment and state of our current facilities, the District conducted an enrollment study and facilities assessment.

Here's what we learned:

Enrollment Study

In 2018, the community growth and enrollment projections study revealed:

The elementary and middle schools are operating over capacity, creating operational challenges. As a result, schools are using spaces and rooms for functions other than their intended purposes, including instruction in hallways and storage spaces.

During the past seven years, student enrollment has increased by 275 students. Based on a recent study, the District is anticipating steady residential growth. With our current configuration, our Elementary and Middle School buildings are over target capacity and approaching maximum capacity. Elementary school enrollment is 833 students with a maximum capacity of 871. Middle school enrollment is at 410 with a maximum capacity of 450.

Facilities Assessment

The District partnered with Plunket Raysich Architects (PRA) to study the current state of our buildings by investigating our existing facilities and the function of the current educational space.

Their study indicated:

Winneconne Elementary

Built in 1949, with additions in 1957 and 1962

- Heating system upgrade done in 2012.
- As one of the largest elementary schools in the state, it currently serves more than 800 students.
- Infrastructure needs include replacement of original windows, roof section replacement, exterior drainage improvements, replacement of flooring, ceilings and doors (as needed), addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues, patch and caulk exterior masonry walls, upgrading of sanitary plumbing, electrical and fire alarm systems
- There is a need to create a secure main entrance to better monitor and control visitor building access

Winneconne Middle School

Built in 1975

- Modular walls were used to create classrooms; wall replacement is recommended to gain more capacity.
- Roof is in need of replacement.
- Infrastructure needs include, replacement of plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems (they are past their useful life), addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues, replacement of bell and fire alarm systems.
- There is a need to create a secure main entrance to better monitor and control visitor building access

Winneconne High School

Built 1998 and additions of STEAM and WCAC built in 2017

- Infrastructure needs include, addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues, replace roof sections, flooring and doors (as needed), upgrade plumbing, and building automation HVAC/electrical system controls
- There is a need to create a secure main entrance to better monitor and control visitor building access

What building options are being considered?

The board is working hard to ensure there are reasonable options for our community to ponder. It is also important to note that in 2012, our community supported a referendum to replace the elementary school boiler/plumbing system and several roof sections on the building. This has provided additional longevity to the elementary school which we want to honor. The middle school, built in 1975, has been well-maintained, but many of the building systems have

exceeded their useful life. So, again, the board is doing their best to provide options that both are both fiscally responsible to the taxpayer and continue to support our students' learning.

As of mid-March the likely questions will center on the following:

- Extending the life of the elementary school for another 10-15 years and begin a search for property on which to build a new school in the future.
- Updating and expanding our middle school - creating a solid building to last us into the future.
- The high school is in relatively good condition, but there are some normal issues a 20 year old building is in need of.

When will I receive my survey?

We are hoping for mid-April. You may complete the survey on-line or on paper. You may also request additional copies of the survey for your family to complete. There is more info to come.

Why is completing my survey important?

Depending upon the survey results, the board may or may not decide to go to referendum in November 2020. What you tell the Board of Education about the options on the survey will determine our Road Ahead.

How does a School District pay for large projects like this?

School referenda (operations or to issue debt) are resolutions placed on the ballot by a Board of Education. If a referendum is sought by a Board of Education, the resolution appears on the ballot in all the municipalities served by the school district.

There are two kinds of referendum: An operating referendum and a capital referendum (to issue debt)? School districts are "capped" or limited in the revenue they can collect from taxpayers. Because of this, school districts have sought a referendum to pay for operating or capital expenses. Winneconne is no exception.

An operating referendum seeks voter approval to seek additional funds to operate the schools. Operating referendums can either be recurring meaning each year, the Board of Education can seek a certain amount over the revenue limit; or non-recurring, meaning voters approve a certain number of years.

In 2016, Winneconne voters approved a \$240,000 non-recurring operating referendum for five years. This expires at the end of next school year (2020-21). The Board of Education will have to ask the voters again in 2020 to renew the operating referendum, or make cuts starting in the 2021-2022 school year.

A capital referendum seeks voter approval to issue debt - or borrow money - for specified purposes as determined by the Board of Education. Likely, a capital referendum would be sought by the Board of Education to complete any building projects.

##