



November 24, 2021

Dear Families,

Over the past two weeks, the South Tama County Community Facilities Task Force hosted several public input meetings to share information and get community feedback on a possible solution to the district's space and capacity needs. We would like to share a recap of these meetings and what we learned through the process.

For some background, the community-driven task force has been working to find an alternative solution to **meet** the needs at STC Middle School for the past year. In March 2020, a majority of voters supported a plan to build a new middle school, but the measure fell just short of the 60% needed to pass. The task force is consulting with INVISION and Estes Construction to evaluate alternative plans, and has also been meeting with staff and students.

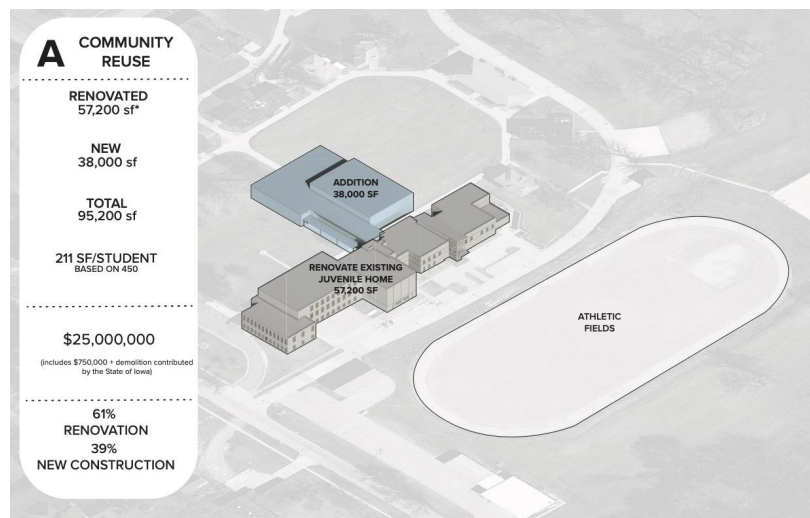
A recent community-wide survey indicated broad consensus that the needs at our middle school should be addressed soon. The building is 106 years old and is considered one of the oldest—if not *the* oldest—functioning middle schools in the state. The lifespan of a typical middle school is 70 years.

The task force has reviewed several options and has narrowed them down to two potential plans:

A) Community Reuse Option

This option would involve renovating the vacant Iowa Juvenile Home, with an addition to right-size the school. It would leverage up to \$750,000 in state funds to create a long-term use for the property, while maintaining a district presence in Toledo. There would also be the potential to add more than 50 housing units to the site.

The estimated cost of this option would be \$25 million. There would be some concern about teacher travel time between sites, which could lead to a loss of 400 staff hours per school year.

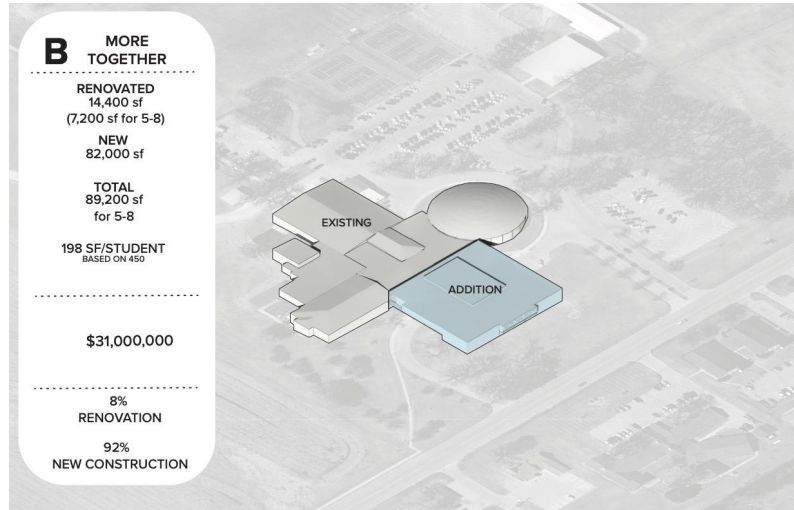


If this option were approved, property taxes would decrease \$3.57/month for the owner of a home assessed at \$100,000. Taxes would decline \$34.71/month on the assessed value of 400 acres of agricultural land. These decreases are possible due to the school district paying off its previous general obligation bond.

B) More Together Option

This option would create a middle school addition to the STC High School campus, at a cost of \$31 million. It would lead to a unified campus and expand the district's ability to host larger events and tournaments. There would be additional programming opportunities, such as agriculture, industrial tech, and family and consumer science.

This option would also result in renovated commons and lab spaces for high school students. Traffic is a potential concern with this option.



An approved More Together option would lead to no change in the current property tax rate.

If we do nothing with the middle school at this time, property taxes would decrease \$12/month for the owner of a home assessed at \$100,000. They would drop \$113/month on the assessed value of 400 acres of agricultural land.

The task force will next meet Monday, December 6, to review the options and potentially decide on making a recommendation to the Board of Education. If you would like to provide your feedback in the meantime, please [visit this link](#) or scan the QR code below:



In case you missed it, you can watch a [video of one of the virtual meetings](#). You can also check out this [packet of information](#) presented at the meetings and visit www.southtamabond.org to learn more about the options under consideration.

We would like to thank our entire community for taking part in this important process to address our middle school facility needs. We look forward to taking the next steps together!

Sincerely,



Dr. Jared Smith
Superintendent