

COMMUNITY TASK FORCE – MEETING #1 SUMMARY

Members of the Central Decatur Community School District and community representatives met on Thursday, February 5, to begin the facility master planning process for the district. The task force will meet approximately three times over the coming months to evaluate the current state of district facilities and help shape a long-term educational vision for Central Decatur CSD.

The committee has been charged with carefully reviewing the condition of existing facilities, understanding current and projected enrollment trends, and ultimately providing a recommendation to the Board of Education regarding the district’s path forward. This first meeting focused on building a shared understanding of the district’s current facility conditions and financial position. The task force represents a broad and diverse cross-section of the community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES ACTIVITY

The meeting began with a prioritization exercise centered on identifying and discussing guiding principles for the planning process. Establishing guiding principles is a critical first step in aligning the group around the purpose and priorities behind potential facility improvements.

There was strong consensus among members regarding the importance of placing student education at the forefront of all decisions, with particular emphasis on safety and security. Fiscal responsibility was also a major theme of discussion, with members underscoring the need to maintain the district’s long-term financial stability in any proposed plan.

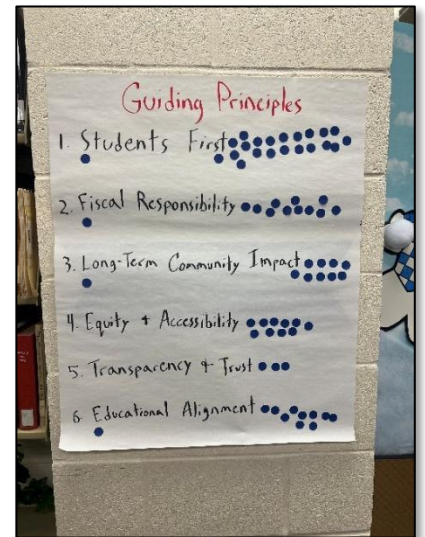


Figure 1: Guiding Principles Exercise

FACILITIES ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

The committee then received a high-level summary of the facilities assessment completed approximately one year ago. Key findings included:

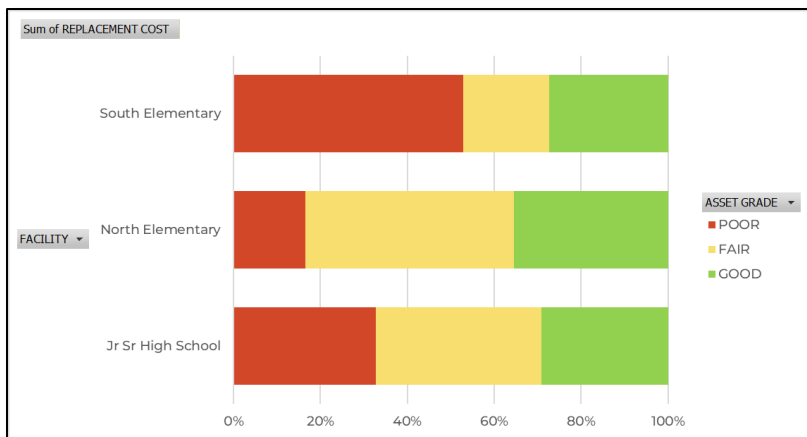


Figure 2: Facility Assessment Overview

South Elementary is in the most significant need of improvement, with slightly more than 50% of its assets rated in poor condition (by rough order of magnitude cost).

The Junior-Senior High School follows, with approximately 35% of assets in poor condition.

North Elementary is in comparatively better condition, with approximately 18% of assets rated as poor.

This overview provided important context for future discussions regarding investment priorities.

ENROLLMENT TRENDS

The task force also reviewed current and historical enrollment data. The primary takeaway is that the district continues to experience declining enrollment, with graduating classes averaging approximately 10 more students than incoming kindergarten classes.

As a result, the district has shifted from functioning as a three-section school to a two-section school. It is important to note that the current facilities were originally designed and constructed to support three-section programming.

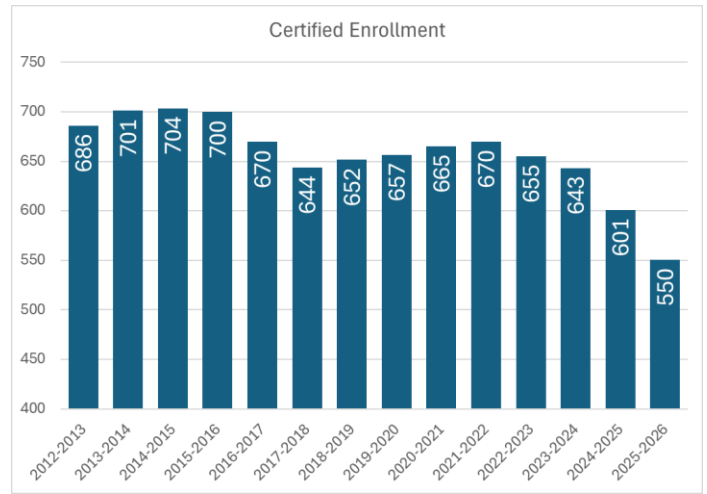


Figure 3: District Certified Enrollment by Year

ONE CAMPUS VS. TWO CAMPUS DISCUSSION

After reviewing enrollment and facility data, the committee engaged in table discussions evaluating the potential benefits and challenges of transitioning from a two-campus model to a single-campus configuration.

Small groups of three to five members discussed the concept of relocating South Elementary to the north campus before sharing their thoughts with the full committee.

Potential Benefits Identified:

- Elimination of redundant spaces (e.g., separate music, art & PE spaces staffed by one teacher)
- Improved operational efficiencies in food service, transportation, and custodial services
- Enhanced sense of district unity
- Increased positive cross-grade interaction opportunities

Potential Challenges Identified:

- Increased traffic flow and site circulation concerns
- Greater possibility of negative interactions between younger students and high school students
- The overall financial investment required for such a project

ADVANTAGES of a single campus	DRAWBACKS to one campus
All staff @ one building (admin, nurse, Etc.) Redundancy of room space / shared teachers Bussing / transportation Meals not being transferred to South - may not need as much staffing more efficient - (utilities, equipment) Better security More educational time	Parking <u>space</u> for all staff + dismissal Losing <u>space</u> for playground + discus + practice fields Higher up front <u>cost</u>

This discussion helped surface both operational efficiencies and community considerations tied to consolidating to one site.

Figure 4: Example Response Sheet from One Campus vs. Two Campus Discussion Exercise

SCHOOL FINANCE REVIEW

Following the campus configuration discussion, the committee received an overview of how school funding works in Iowa, with particular emphasis on facility-related funding sources.

Members reviewed:

- Current revenue streams dedicated to facilities
- Existing district debt
- Potential project budgets from various funding sources
- Historical large capital projects and their inflation-adjusted costs
- Historical district tax rates

This information provided financial context to inform future decision-making.

YEAR	PROJECT	FUNDING SOURCE	COST	TODAY'S COST (2027 Dollars)
2023	Fluid Cooler, Gym HVAC, Roof Coatings	SAVE Borrowing	\$1,857,300 Bond retires in June 2030	\$2,090,000
2015	Athletic Complex/Bus Barn	SAVE Borrowing	\$5,275,335 (P&I) Bond retires in June 2029	\$7,900,000
2003	North Elementary & South Elementary PK Addition	G.O. Bond	\$5,502,905	\$12,360,000
1985	Jr-Sr High School Building	G.O. Bond	Not known at this time.	\$36,000,000

Figure 5: Previous "Large" Projects Completed by the District

February 5th, 2026 Central Decatur CSD
Community Task Force - Meeting #1

CAREER-BASED LEARNING DISCUSSION

1. When students graduate from Central Decatur CSD, what real-world skills should they already have—regardless of whether they go to college, the workforce, or the military?

a. Which of those skills are learned in a classroom vs. in an on-hands / work-based setting?
b. How is the district addressing those real-world skills?
c. Are you aware of any limitations the current facilities may be causing?

Finances, employability skills, communication skills
trades (getting away from hobby)

2. How well do current career-based programs at the district reflect the jobs, industries, and workforce needs of our local and regional economy (industrial tech, ag, family & consumer science, nursing, business)?

Ag is top, family & consumer science top program
Nursing, industrial tech also moving forward

3. Are there any district-level program gaps based on the current and forecasted job market that could be addressed by enhancing/improving current programs or adding new programs?

Using grant funds available to improve

CAREER-BASED LEARNING DISCUSSION

The final working session focused on career-based learning programs within the district. Table groups discussed the strengths, limitations, and opportunities related to existing facilities.

The group expressed strong support for the district’s agriculture program and culinary arts program. The group also noted the growth that nursing (CNA) and industrial technology programs are seeing.

However, staff members noted that existing room sizes and layouts limit the full potential of these programs. Spaces were described as less functional than desired and not optimized for modern instructional needs. The need for additional and more flexible space was identified as a key consideration moving forward.

Figure 6: Example Career-Based Learning Discussion/Response

PRELIMINARY CONCEPT REVIEW

To conclude the meeting, the committee reviewed initial conceptual ideas for:

- Bringing South Elementary to the north campus
- Upgrading and modernizing the Junior-Senior High School, including career-based learning spaces

The meeting adjourned with committee members providing initial reactions and feedback on the preliminary concepts presented.

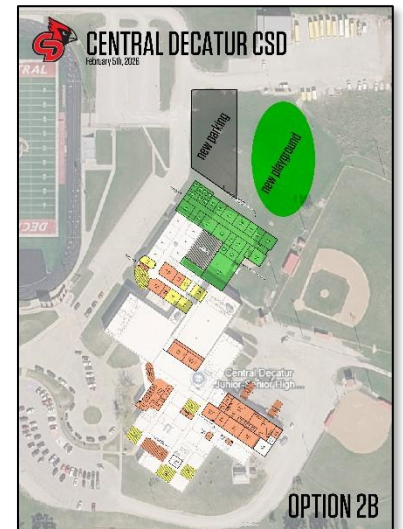


Figure 7: Committee Members Discussing in Table Groups