



# Central Decatur Community School District

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## **Planning For The Future: Central Decatur Community School District Board Unanimously Approves a One Campus Facility Master Plan**

LEON, Iowa — The Central Decatur Community School District Board of Education has unanimously approved a comprehensive facility master plan designed to improve student safety, modernize learning environments, and position the district for long-term operational efficiency.

Following a comprehensive planning process that began in November 2024 with a detailed facilities assessment, the Central Decatur Community School District Board of Education tonight approved a facility master plan that sets the stage for a bond referendum this fall. The plan is the culmination of a community-led process, guided by a 16-member task force of community members, staff, and board representatives who met throughout the winter and spring of 2026 to review facility conditions, analyze financial options, and ultimately deliver a master plan recommendation to the board. The proposed plan represents a strategic investment in Central Decatur's future by addressing current enrollment realities, improving educational spaces, and ensuring district resources are used responsibly for generations to come.

“Today’s decision reflects our commitment to providing students with high-quality learning environments while being responsible stewards of taxpayer resources,” said Board President Amber Swartz. “We have inspected everything—from heating and cooling systems to roofs and accessibility. We looked at where we have too much space, where we are crowded, and what needs fixing first. This plan addresses those immediate facility needs, improves safety, and positions Central Decatur for long-term success. Just as importantly, this process has been guided by input from parents, staff, students, and community members. We are committed to continuing that conversation, sharing information openly, and earning the trust of our community every step of the way.”

At the heart of the plan is the consolidation of elementary operations onto a single elementary campus through the construction of a classroom addition at the existing North Elementary facility. The project would create new classroom spaces, a new cafeteria, relocated of the elementary office, expanded office areas, and improved student support spaces while allowing the district to eliminate redundant facilities and operational costs. This plan also prioritizes student safety in converting both the Junior- Senior High and Elementary entrances into secure entries.



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The Board-approved improvement plan includes:

- **Safety and Security:** Keeping our students and staff safe is our absolute top priority. This plan will ensure our facilities meet high safety standards and are accessible for everyone.
- **Spending Wisely and Responsibly:** This plan helps us build a predictable, common-sense approach to facility investments by addressing needs proactively, maximizing available resources, and operating as efficiently as possible.
- **Better Spaces for Learning:** We want to make sure our classrooms match the way kids learn today. That means updating technology and creating flexible spaces that prepare students for the future.

Current enrollment projections show the district maintaining a two-section elementary for the foreseeable future. By consolidating elementary operations, the district can reduce redundant spaces, improve staff collaboration, increase instructional efficiency, and lower long-term maintenance and operational expenses.

"Rather than continuing to invest significant resources into aging facilities, this plan allows us to right-size our buildings for today's and tomorrow's enrollment while creating modern, efficient spaces for students and staff," said Superintendent Chris Coffelt. "The result is a stronger educational experience and a more sustainable future for our district. As we move forward, we want community members to stay engaged, ask questions, and learn more about the proposal. This plan is about building a stronger future together, and transparency and community involvement will remain central throughout the process."

In addition to the immediate projects included in the approved plan, district leaders have identified a future phase of facility improvements that may be pursued as funding becomes available. These future projects include prioritizing career-based learning at the Junior-Senior High School with renovations and upgrades to agricultural, culinary arts, nursing, industrial tech, and business programs. Additional future projects that are being considered include Junior-Senior High restroom upgrades and general classroom upgrades such as ceiling and flooring replacements.

The Board-approved Phase 1 improvement plan carries an estimated investment of approximately \$11.9 million and focuses on projects that address the district's most pressing facility, safety, and operational needs.

Additional information regarding the facility improvement plan, project details, and next steps will be shared with district families and community members in the coming weeks.



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## **Community Involvement and Next Steps**

A General Obligation Bond election is proposed for November 3, 2026. Community members are currently gathering petition signatures to place the measure on the ballot, and residents may also stop by the District Office to sign the petition during regular business hours.

All residents are encouraged to learn more about the proposed improvement plan by reviewing the district's comprehensive facility planning process, findings, and recommendations.

Additional information, including project details, informational meetings, facility tours, and community engagement opportunities will be shared throughout the summer and fall leading up to Election Day.

Stay informed by visiting the district's facility planning webpage at [www.centraldecatour.org](http://www.centraldecatour.org) and following Central Decatur Community School District on Facebook. Check back regularly for updates, event announcements, and opportunities to learn more about the proposed improvements and their impact on students, staff, and the community.