
SCOTT COUNTY
COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1

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15 May 2024

Winchester School Community

Since August 2023, the Board of Education has been reviewing the district's building needs. The building committee has worked with the district's architect and construction professionals throughout this process to determine immediate, intermediate, and delayed repairs needed. The committee has focused on the Winchester High School during this time.

During the process the committee identified several immediate repairs that were needed. In preparing cost estimates for these repairs it became apparent these costs were going to be substantial and the committee recommended to the Board of Education that a different path forward may be needed. The Board of Education, hearing the focus on safety and security, ADA compliance, and physical and learning environments, made the decision to engage our school community to gather more information on what direction the Board should focus.

Since January 2024, the committee has met with construction professionals and the architects to develop some options to address the high school needs. These options included:

- Addressing immediate needs of ADA compliance, asbestos removal, renovation of restrooms, and a new HVAC system.
- Addressing all the immediate needs (listed above) and adding facilities to the current building to have the high school campus under one roof for security, adding a new gym, adding kitchen/cafeteria, and renovating all the classroom space for 21st century learning.
- Constructing a new high school to house all programs under a single building.

Beginning in March 2024, the district began the process of hosting forums to share this information and cost structures to the Winchester Community. The first forum consisted of faculty and staff of the school district (approximately 90 members). The second, third, and fourth forums were attended by a total of 225 community members. The fifth forum consisted of

80 high school students (Juniors and Seniors). From the data collected at those forums, it appeared that those attending the forums preferred the construction of a new high school option. Using this information, the final forum was held in May to determine a “preferred” site location with the results showing that site on district property south of the grade school.

The purpose of hosting the forums was to give the Board of Education some direction in what the Winchester community wanted. Knowing this direction will allow the Board of Education to focus on the preferred option.

On May 14, the Board of Education made the decision to take the next step in the process. This process is to engage with our consultant firm (Creative Entourage) to develop focus groups, collect information, develop a survey, and provide results of that effort to the Board of Education. It is our hope that all of the Winchester Community will participate in this survey process in order for the Board to make a better-informed decision on what the community wants.

Over the coming weeks, we will begin sharing information to participate in focus groups, collecting input, and conducting the survey with the community. Once this process is completed, our consultants will share the data with the Board of Education for their review. Upon the Board’s review of the data, we will provide an opportunity to share this information and collect more follow up information, if necessary.

You can find the forum information and presentations on the school’s website:

<https://www.winchesterschools.net/vnews/display.v/SEC/Building%20Project%20Information>

We want to thank everyone that has participated in the process over this time and encourage all of our community to engage in the upcoming process.

Sincerely,

Kevin Blankenship
Superintendent