



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **West Bend School Board Discusses Project Range for Potential November 2024 Referendum**

West Bend - The West Bend School Board continues to examine data and community feedback in regard to the future of the West Bend School District facilities as it moves closer to making a decision on a proposed Phase 1 long-range facilities plan solution for the November 5, 2024 election.

During a work session on Tuesday, June 25, board members processed facilities survey feedback, community conversations feedback, facility assessment data, and preliminary construction estimates to begin to finalize a first phase of a Long-Range Facility plan and proposed referendum question.

In response to feedback from the community survey, the board agreed that targeting a referendum amount that may not exceed \$110 million would likely be more acceptable for the community. However, at the next board meeting on July 8, district administrators will present a detailed and revised plan. Importantly, the range of \$100-\$110 million allows the district to accomplish integral security improvements, address critical capital maintenance improvements such as replacing Jackson Elementary, realign grade levels, and close several buildings in response to declining enrollment district-wide and to improve operational efficiency.

EUA, Findorff, and Baird are now finalizing the proposed plan based on the board's direction this week. The main features of the revised first phase of a Long-Range Facility plan, which are items to be covered by a potential referendum in November, include:

- Targeted renovations to areas at East/West High School, Green Tree, and McLane to create secure main office entries and provide additional layers of security throughout the schools.
- Closing Decorah Elementary, Fair Park Elementary, Rolfs Education Center, the Education Service Center, and converting Green Tree, McLane, and Silverbrook schools to serve as

K-5 elementary schools. Badger Middle School would then serve grades 6-8. The Education Service Center would be integrated into the high schools building.

- Replacing Jackson Elementary with a new grades K-5 building on district-owned land on Jackson Drive, adjacent to the community center.
- Relocating Early Learning Program classrooms from Rolfs to McLane and Green Tree and adding bathrooms to accommodate early learning and renovating to create a larger health room in each school.
- Address priority capital maintenance throughout all buildings that would remain open.

The West Bend School District administration recommended to the board that a replacement school in Jackson be for grades K-5. As a result, all grades 6-8 students in the district would attend Badger, which can be accommodated without additional facility costs due anticipated declining enrollment.

The administration made the K-5 recommendation in the interest of prioritizing a consistent K-5 model across the district and balancing academics, athletics, and co-curricular offerings at the middle school level. Additionally, it will cost approximately \$20 million less, which frees up funds for high-priority capital projects, including improvements at the East and West High Schools building.

The board will continue to discuss the elements of the developing project at its July 8 regular meeting and refine final project details at another work session on July 22. The board will then take formal action in August to adopt the required ballot resolutions for the November 5, 2024 election and begin an extensive public information and community outreach effort.

The West Bend Joint School District #1 is proud to serve nearly 5,800 students and their families from the city of West Bend, villages of Jackson and Newburg, and townships of Barton, Polk, Trenton, Jackson, West Bend, and Addison. We strive to ensure that every student is given the opportunity to reach their potential through academics, the arts, and co-curricular activities. Visit [www.west-bend.k12.wi.us](http://www.west-bend.k12.wi.us) for more information.

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