



## Preparing Our Students for the Future

A great education prepares our children for a successful future.

The School District of La Crosse has a rich tradition of preparing our students for the next steps in their lives. To continue ensuring that our students have access to first-class educational and extracurricular opportunities, we must make sure students have access to modern classrooms and labs for collaborative, flexible, and hands-on learning.

Due to aging buildings, declining enrollment, and district budget challenges, the School District of La Crosse is facing a critical point in addressing our facilities.

Building a new, consolidated high school and moving grades 6-8 into the existing high schools will provide the educational, elective, athletics, arts, and extracurricular opportunities in environments our 6-12 students deserve to prepare them for the future.

## Why Now?

- The combination of declining enrollment, aging buildings, and no new state funding for education over the past two years has increased the district's budget deficit
- The current middle school buildings do not have the capability to offer the modern learning opportunities our 6-8 graders deserve
- We are currently unable to offer the electives and career and technical education opportunities that students want / need due to the lack of labs, classrooms, and workshops at current high schools
- The District has been proactive in repaying previous referendum debt, resulting in interest savings for our taxpayers. This has also created an opportunity to make this investment with minimal impact on taxpayers
- The former Trane headquarters site is available and provides the unique opportunity to build a new high school from an existing building for less cost than building a new high school on an undeveloped site

## Attend our Upcoming Community Info Sessions

**20 September, Tuesday**  
Logan Middle School  
6:30-8:30 PM

★ **05 October, Wednesday**  
Virtual | 6:30-8:30 PM

**06 October, Thursday**  
Lincoln Middle School  
6:30-8:30 PM

**18 October, Tuesday**  
Central High School  
6:30-8:30 PM

**26 October, Wednesday**  
Logan High School  
6:30-8:30 PM

★ *Indicates Virtual Meeting*  
Please visit [www.lacrosseschools.org/referendum](http://www.lacrosseschools.org/referendum) for link to virtual meetings.

Visit [www.lacrosseschools.org/referendum](http://www.lacrosseschools.org/referendum) to view frequently asked questions about the referendum



## Contact



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[www.lacrosseschools.org/referendum](http://www.lacrosseschools.org/referendum)



@LaCrosseSchools

## The Challenges



### Declining Enrollment

- District-wide decline of:
- 1,636 students since 2001
  - 793 students since 2011

Like most other school districts in the state, enrollment has been declining, and based on a study conducted by UW Applied Population Lab the School District of La Crosse will continue to decline for at least another ten years due to declining birth rates



### Budget Deficits

- District funding is determined per pupil, fewer students = less money
- No new state funding for schools over the last two years
- Future district budgets will be less than the amount needed to maintain existing facilities and programs
- Older school buildings have higher maintenance costs - the average age of our buildings are over 60 years old



### Aging Buildings

- \$81 million identified District-wide infrastructure / maintenance needs, over \$18 million at middle schools alone
- The district's annual capital improvement budget is \$1.2 million
- All three middle school buildings are over 80 years old

## The Investment

The School District of La Crosse tax mill rate has **decreased by \$2.91 per \$1,000 of property value** (\$291 per \$100,000) since the 2013-2014 school year. If approved, the district can make this investment for a tax mill rate increase of \$0.08 per \$1,000 of property value.

| Referendum Amount Not to Exceed \$194,700,000 |                  |                   |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| Mill Rate Per \$1,000                         | \$0.08           |                   |
| Equalized Property Value                      | Estimated Annual | Estimated Monthly |
| \$100,000                                     | \$8.00           | \$0.67            |
| \$150,000                                     | \$12.00          | \$1.00            |
| \$200,000                                     | \$16.00          | \$1.33            |
| \$250,000                                     | \$20.00          | \$1.67            |
| \$300,000                                     | \$24.00          | \$2.00            |

Referendum financing assumes four phases at estimated interest rates of 3.75% to 4.00% amortized over a total of 23 years. Mill rate assumes estimated growth in equalized value of 2.5% for the first two years and tertiary aid impact of -8.69%. Example financing scenarios could be impacted by other variables, such as significant market shifts, statutory changes, or the future of state funding, which may necessitate adjustments to the financing plans.

The School District of La Crosse will **invest** the estimated annual operating savings of **\$4.5 million in our teachers and student programming.**

## OPTION EVALUATION

Through a two-year process that included feedback from community focus groups and two community surveys, a one high school solution emerged to best address the challenges the School District of La Crosse is facing.

### Process at a Glance

Numerous options were presented to the School Board, which were narrowed down to a group of options for the Focus Groups to review. They identified elementary, middle, and high school consolidation options that were presented in the community surveys. The feedback was **favorable for one 6-12 solution** to address the needs and challenges.

## FORMER TRANE HQ SITE

- Located at 3600 Pammel Creek Rd
- The only available 40-acre site of the 11 sites explored
- Re-purposing the existing building with a complete renovation and addition saves on the total cost of the project with 204,000 square feet of renovation and 323,300 square feet of additions
- Near State Road Elementary School and existing baseball and softball fields for practices and games

## The 6-12 Solution

**Building a new, consolidated High School opens the current Logan High School and Central High School buildings to serve as 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade middle schools.**

**Transitioning grades 6-8 students to the existing high school buildings is an immediate improvement to the middle school experience with access to space and programs:**

- Laboratories for science curriculum
- Physical education and athletic facilities
- Technical education classrooms and labs
- Band, choir, and music classrooms

**The New High School will provide modern classrooms and labs for collaborative, flexible, and hands-on learning, such as:**

- Ability to offer electives students are asking for and need
- Increased opportunities, labs, and courses to explore career and technical courses to prepare our students for the jobs of the future, such as: *Engineering, Robotics, Advanced Manufacturing, Automotive, Culinary Arts, Health Sciences, etc.*
- Increased options and opportunities in all aspects of the student experience - academics, arts, athletics, extracurriculars, etc.
- Estimated annual savings of \$4.5 million through efficiencies gained by moving from five to three middle and high school buildings

