



Growing Our District Together

River Bend's Response to Community Input

District Responses to Questions from May 19, 2025, Public Meeting and Survey Feedback

On behalf of the River Bend School District, as well as Veregy (District Construction Partner), and PMA Financial (District Financial Partner), we thank you for your time and feedback during the Community Event on May 19, 2025, where ideas were presented on potential solutions to address the growing needs of the district and community. All the feedback, questions, and ideas discussed are invaluable in helping determine the best path forward as we consider future potential construction and renovations within the school district that will serve the district and community for years to come. Over the past few weeks, we have continued to collect additional feedback through the online survey provided during our meeting. After compiling all of the feedback from the Community Event and the Online Survey, the District Administration, Board, and Construction Team have provided the following responses to many of the questions and ideas presented.

Addressing the Need for Additional Space:

River Bend currently has a PE waiver for K-8th grade, which allows the district to modify the daily PE requirement. The Board of Education aims to provide daily physical education to elementary and middle school students and is exploring the addition of a new gym. Along with the new gym, two other needs have arisen that need attention. The performing arts spaces do not adequately represent the high-quality programming that River Bend offers. The Board of Education is considering how to address the lack of performing arts space. The wrestling program at FHS has expanded and can no longer safely practice in the current spaces. The Board of Education is addressing the shortage of space for the wrestling team by creating a multi-sport (baseball, golf, and wrestling space along with locker, shower, and storage).

How does the current Tax Rate compare to other surrounding districts?

District	Operating Tax Rate	B&I Tax Rate	Total Tax Rate	2025 % of Adequacy
River Bend District 2	\$3.99	\$0.48	\$4.47	69.9%
West Carroll District 314	\$4.82	\$0.43	\$5.26	99.4%
Prophetstown-Lydon-Tampico District 3	\$4.33	\$0.00	\$4.33	84.4%
Morrison District 6	\$4.02	\$0.66	\$4.69	74.5%
Riverdale District 100	\$3.93	\$0.48	\$4.41	81.5%
Erie District 1	\$2.87	\$0.00	\$2.87	279.0%
Milledgeville District 399	\$4.89	\$0.70	\$5.59	103.1%



Community Questions & District Answers

River Bend's Response to Community Input

What is the history of previous Referendums in the District?

The last referendum the District passed was 30 years ago in 1995 to expand the HS gym and add spaces to both the middle school and elementary buildings.

What is the history of previous Referendums in the District?

River Bend has utilized funding from various sources, including Operations/Maintenance, Health, Life Safety, and the 1% Sales Tax, for necessary upgrades and maintenance of the District's Facilities over the last 10+ years. We are currently assessing our next 10-year Health Life Safety needs, along with a Long-term look at the Infrastructure needs for all District facilities. Upon review of this information in August 2025, the District can determine if any additional funding would be available to contribute to any of the proposed Construction Scenarios. Funding a portion of the current construction project may be possible.

Given projected enrollment, do the Scenarios include necessary classroom space?

Yes, based on the current needs and historical growth, we have included the necessary classroom spaces at the Middle School/Elementary Campus. Given the current flex spaces available at the High School Campus, the district does not anticipate needing additional classroom space in the foreseeable future.

Will current funding be sufficient for necessary infrastructure improvements?

The District is evaluating the long-term needs of its building and grounds and will have an understanding of its long-term needs in August 2025.

Below is a table of River Bend's construction scenarios with projected budget costs.

Construction Scenarios & Project Budget Needs	Project Budget Range Per Scenario
Option A (Middle School [M.S.] Gym)	\$12.6M - \$13.7M
Option B (M.S. Gym, and H.S. Wrestling)	\$18M - \$19.7M
Option C (M.S. Gym, H.S. Wrestling, H.S. Performing Arts, and New H.S. Gym/Multi-Purpose Athletic Space)	\$29.7M- \$32.4M
M.S. Parking Addition	\$1.1M-\$1.3M
Fulton Elementary School (F.E.S.) Classroom	\$820,000 - \$900,000



Community Questions & District Answers

River Bend's Response to Community Input

Can the District describe planned uses for all new and existing athletic areas?

Current Use of Athletic Spaces

Existing Middle School Gym and Locker Rooms – Currently, the District is unable to offer PE every day to students in grades K-8 due to a lack of space. Both the elementary and middle schools have very small gyms that are open throughout the entire day. Middle School athletic events take place at RBMS, but due to the size of the gym, viewing capacity is very limited. Parents and visitors are crowded into the few available seats. PE classes take place each day and there are practices after school. The community recreation programs also use the gyms after school but are limited to time in the winter with the volume of recreational teams that want to access the spaces.

Existing Elementary School Gymnasium – Due to a lack of gym space at FES the elementary students use the middle school gym space when the middle school students are not using it. The elementary gym also serves as the lunchroom from 10:30 to 1:30 so access to the gym is not possible.

Existing High School Small Gymnasium – The small gym at the high school is used for practices after school for sports teams. Thespians also access the stage for performances and practices. The District hosts most of its band and choir performances in this gym as well. Many travel and recreational teams use the gym for practice after hours.

Existing High School Large Gymnasium – This is the District's main HS gym and the space where most athletic contests that require a gym take place. PE uses the spaces every day for PE classes. The space is used by the community for travel and recreational activities and practices.

Existing High School Locker Rooms – The HS has three sets of locker rooms. Football uses the downstairs locker room for in-season and out-of-season. Some students use the lockers to store weight room workout clothing.

A second downstairs locker room is used by the boys' basketball team. This locker room houses 9th- to 12th-grade basketball players and the coaches. Students also use the space to change for weight training in the weight room.

A set of male and female lockers is available in the new west gym, used for PE and students participating in a variety of sports.

Existing High School Wrestling Room – The existing HS wrestling room is used by the HS wrestling team and the recreational community wrestling program. The wrestling program has grown such that it needs additional practice space. Girls wrestling was recently added to the FHS athletic menu and spaces are needed to support the growth of the wrestling program.



Community Questions & District Answers

River Bend's Response to Community Input

Can the District describe planned uses for all new and existing athletic areas?

Future Use of Space with Proposed Construction/Renovation

Existing Middle School Gym & Locker Rooms – The existing RBMS gym will continue to be used as a physical education classroom for FES students. The showers located in the locker rooms will be removed and the space repurposed for storage, an additional laundry facility, and a potential workspace for maintenance and custodial staff.

New Middle School Gymnasium & Locker Rooms – The new physical education classroom at RBMS will be used to meet daily P.E. requirements for all RBMS students and will allow for greater flexibility in class scheduling. Outside of the school day, the gymnasium will be used for school athletic and extracurricular activities as well as community athletic and extracurricular activities. Locker rooms will be used as needed for day-to-day classes and will be utilized by home and away teams for athletic and extracurricular activities.

Existing Elementary School Gymnasium – The existing FES space is used as a cafegymnasium. Additional gym space at RBMS will enable all FES physical education classes to be relocated to RBMS. This would provide additional time to prepare the elementary space prior to lunch and to clean up after lunch. The space could also be used for grade-level academic activities and presentations throughout the remainder of the day that may require more space than a single classroom could offer.

Existing High School Small Gymnasium (Performing Arts) – Reimagining the small high school gym as an auditorium would provide a number of opportunities for the community to visit the school. The space would allow for plays, performances, and concerts to be held with reduced setup and teardown time. In addition to use by the thespians and music departments, other student groups could use the space to host public speaking events and invite guest speakers to lead presentations for students. The Steamer of the Quarter, 3.0 Awards, and other events could also be held in the space. This would also be a space where community groups could host presentations and events.

Existing High School Large Gymnasium – The existing large gymnasium at FHS will continue to serve as the competition space for all FHS sports.

Existing High School Locker Rooms – There are several existing high school locker room spaces. Those located in the old gym would be converted into dressing rooms and storage spaces needed for events held in the new auditorium. The locker rooms adjacent to the large gymnasium would benefit from updated lockers and showers equivalent to the increased number of athletes involved in the various programs. The coaches' locker room will need to be updated to ensure adequate space for the variety of events that will be held in the existing large gym and the new gymnasium.



Community Questions & District Answers

River Bend's Response to Community Input

Can the District describe planned uses for all new and existing athletic areas?

(Continued) Future Use of Space with Proposed Construction/Renovation

New Proposed High School Gymnasium Space – The new space will allow for multiple practices to occur at the same time allowing for student athletes to get home earlier. Outside of athletic events, additional extracurricular activities could be held in the gymnasium including larger concerts, marching band practice, and student meetings. Locating the new gym adjacent to the large gym will allow for community organizations and rec leagues to effectively use the space outside of the school day.

Existing High School Wrestling Room – The existing high school wrestling room will be repurposed for athletic storage needs. Additional uses will be considered as building plans are finalized.

New High School Wrestling Space Multipurpose Space & Locker Rooms – The new multipurpose room will allow for a number of athletic teams to efficiently utilize the space throughout the year. What started as a plan to increase space for the boys and girls wrestling teams has grown into a space that can house batting cages, a golf simulator, and cheer practices. The addition of locker rooms for both boys and girls will allow for maximum use of the room by all student athletes.

Additional Community Questions and District Answers

How will the football team access the field with Option C?

Veregy (District Design/Construction Partner) has provided a conceptual design to ensure that all of the space needs are being met. During final Design Development, adjustments will be made to ensure that the Football Team can safely and efficiently access the Football field.

Could the new proposed HS Gym be used for Performing Arts?

All spaces will be designed to support uses for Athletics and Performing Arts Performances.

Can we remove restrooms from the Stage?

Yes, the restrooms have been removed from the conceptual design.

Are locker rooms needed for Wrestling space with other existing locker rooms?

Yes, the new Locker Rooms will be used for Wrestling Students and Sports Teams Utilizing the New Gym Space. The existing Locker Rooms will continue to be used by all Girls/Boys Sports Teams (roughly 40-60 students).



Community Questions & District Answers

River Bend's Response to Community Input

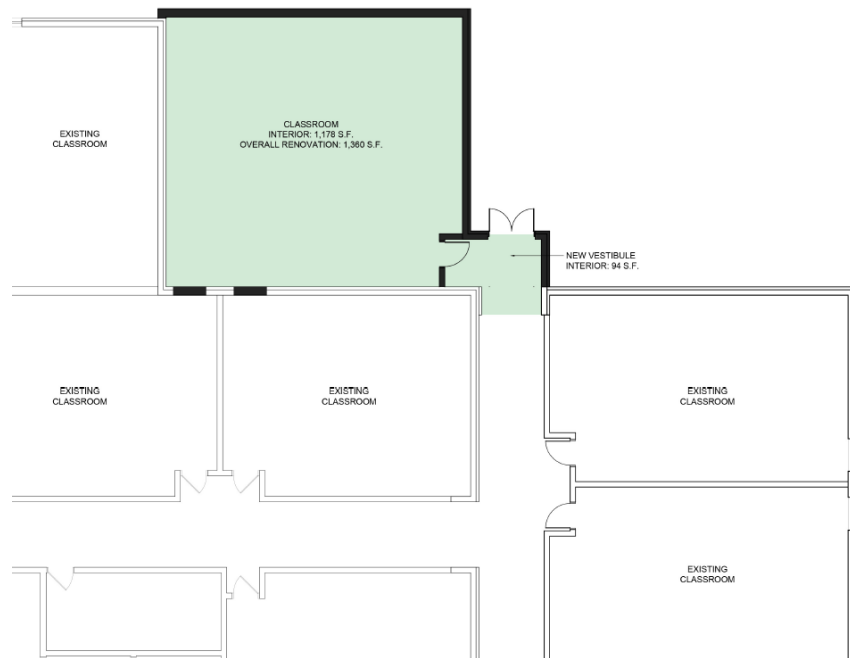
How would parking be addressed?

Veregy (District Design/Construction Partner) is working toward addressing the additional parking needs at the Middle School /Elementary School campus and has developed the following preliminary conceptual design that would provide 84 additional spaces. During Final Design Development, adjustments may be made to maximize parking while maintaining budgets.

Parking at the High School Campus has continued to be a challenge given the location. Veregy will continue to explore options with the District and City on a parking expansion around the High School Campus.



New Parking Around Middle School Campus



New Elem. School Classroom – 1,360 S.F.

Will any improvements be made to Fulton Elementary School (F.E.S)?

We are looking at options to build a 1,360 square foot classroom addition to the Fulton Elementary School, which will flank existing classrooms. Reference the layout above for this addition as well as the project budget needs for this addition on page 2.



Growing Our District Together

River Bend's Response to Community Input

River Bend School District is committed to continuing to work with staff, students and the community to consider the best path forward for addressing current and future needs. To continue providing necessary background, and information on the solutions presented for consideration, we plan to hold the following Community Event(s) to solicit more feedback and discussion:

August Open Houses (Date to be listed)

- FES kindergarten signing dates – August 13, 1:00 - 3:00 P.M.
- FES backpack night – August 13, 5:00-6:00 P.M.
- RBMS backpack night – August 13
- RBMS – Family Trivia Night in October

Community Meeting (Date to be listed)

- Meet the Steamers @ FHS - August 22
- One or two additional dates still to be determined

Following these additional Community Events, the River Bend School District will then review all feedback with the intent of making a final decision in the Fall on putting a Referendum Vote for consideration during the April 2026 election.

We thank you again for your dedication to ensure that River Bend continues to provide the best education for all of our students in the community for years to come.

Sincerely,

Dr. Darryl Hogue & Ms. Kelli Parsons





Growing our District Together

District Position

The Illinois State Board of Education requires P.E. daily for students in grades K-12. For many years, River Bend has obtained waivers that allow for P.E. to be held every second or third day for students in grades K-8. The P.E. waiver is often at risk of being revoked and the lack of regular, daily exercise does not best meet the needs of our students.

District Goals

- Meet State Physical Education requirements.
- Address facility shortcomings for athletic and extracurricular activities district-wide.
- Improve Performing Arts spaces, which do not adequately represent the high-quality programming River Bend offers.
- Address space shortages and other constraints faced by the district.

Construction Plan



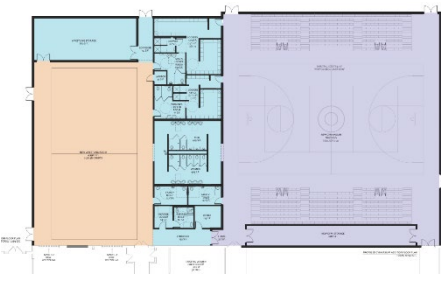
Add Gymnasium and Classrooms at RBMS



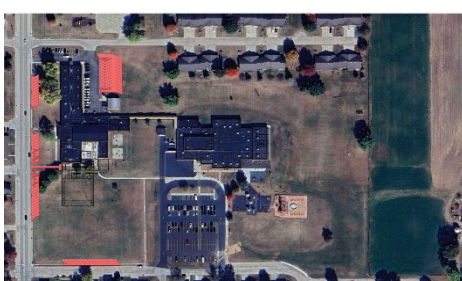
Add Multipurpose Room at FHS



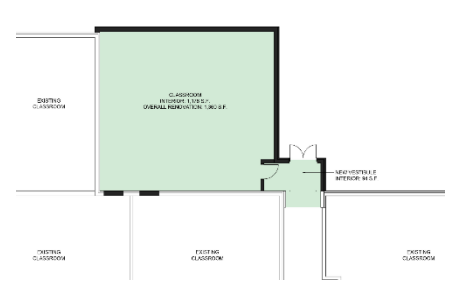
Renovate the old gym at FHS into a Performing Arts Center



Add Gymnasium, Locker Rooms, and Storage Space at FHS



Add 84 Parking Spaces at RBMS



Add a Classroom at FES

Project Budget	Tax Impact
\$12M Project	\$234 per \$100,000 in assessed property value
\$17M Project	\$332 per \$100,000 in assessed property value
\$28M Project	\$544 per \$100,000 in assessed property value
\$33M Project	\$641 per \$100,000 in assessed property value
\$80M Project	\$1,547 per \$100,000 in assessed property value



Scan Me

Your Continued Feedback is Important!

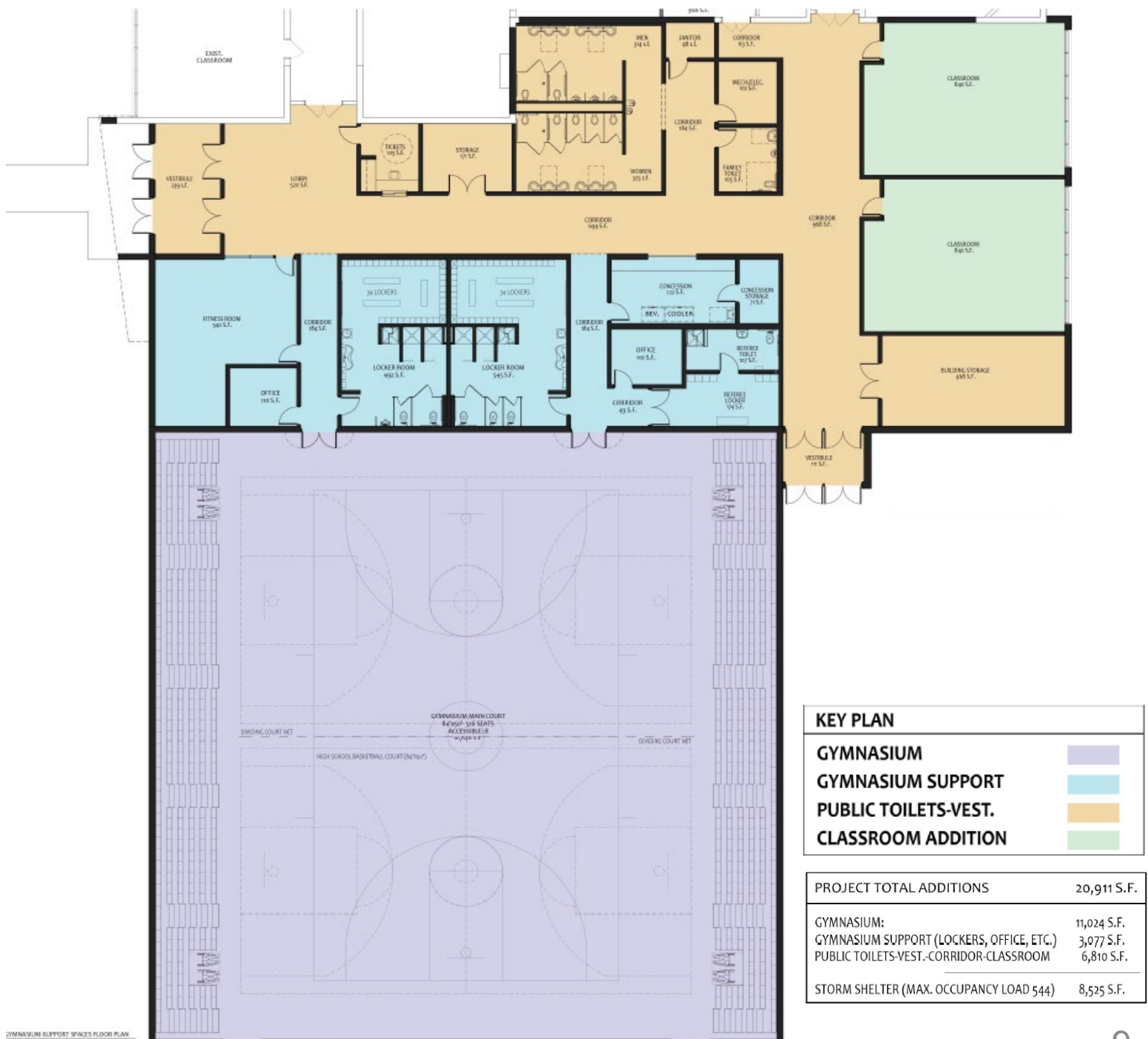
Please respond using the QR code above or send an email kparsons@riverbendschools.net.



Growing Our District Together

Updated Floorplans Post Community Feedback

Option A: New Middle School Gym, Locker Rooms, Fitness Room, Coach Office, Concessions, Two New Classrooms



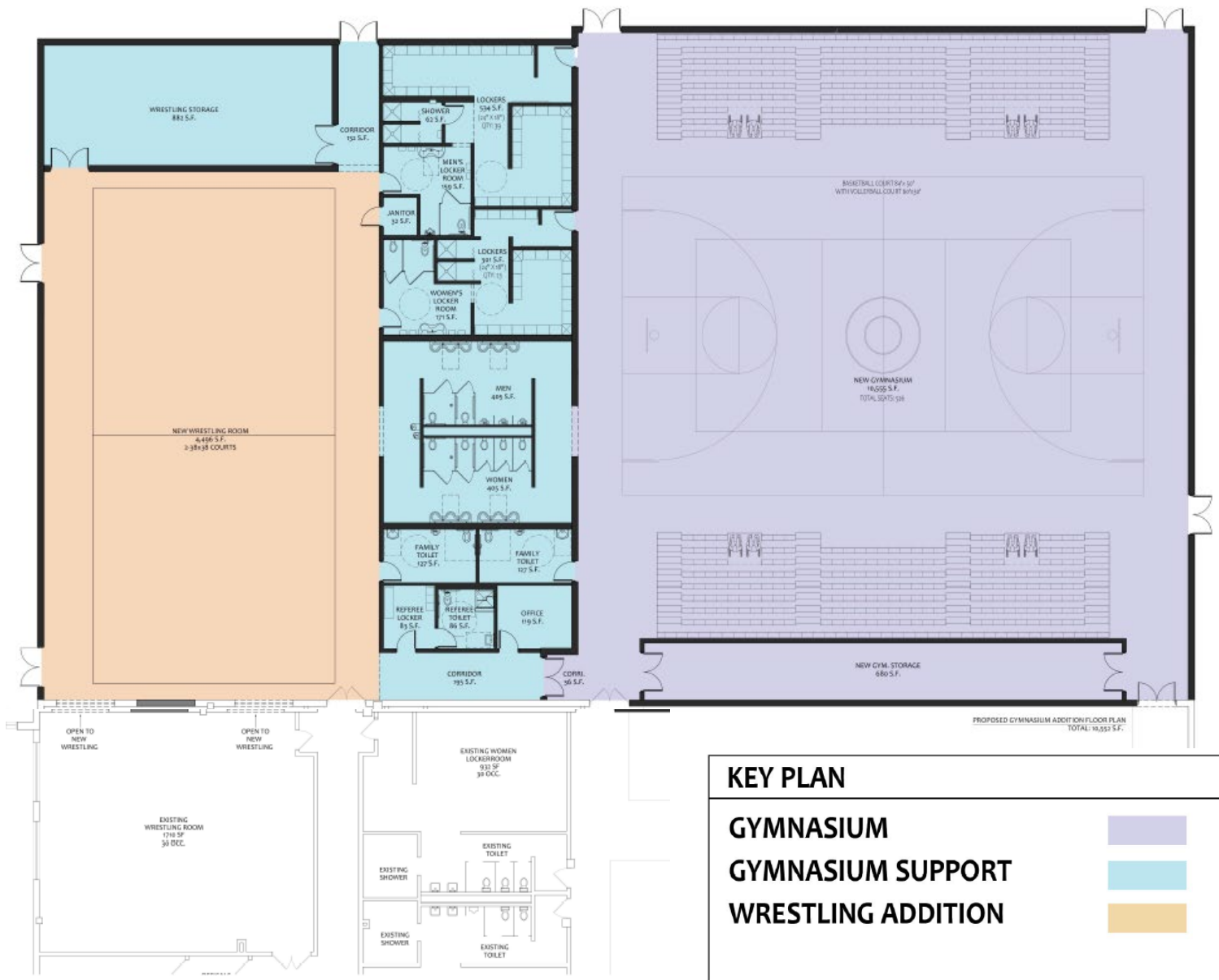


Growing Our District Together

Updated Floorplans Post Community Feedback

Option B: New M.S. Gym (Page 9), New H.S. Wrestling Room, Locker Rooms, Restrooms, Family Restrooms, Ref. Locker room, Coach Office Space, and Wrestling Storage

Option C: New H.S. Performing Arts (Page 11), New M.S. Gym (Page 9), New H.S. Gym(Multi-Purpose Athletic Space), New Wrestling Room, Locker Rooms, Restrooms, Family Restrooms, Ref. Locker room, Coach Office Space, and Wrestling Storage

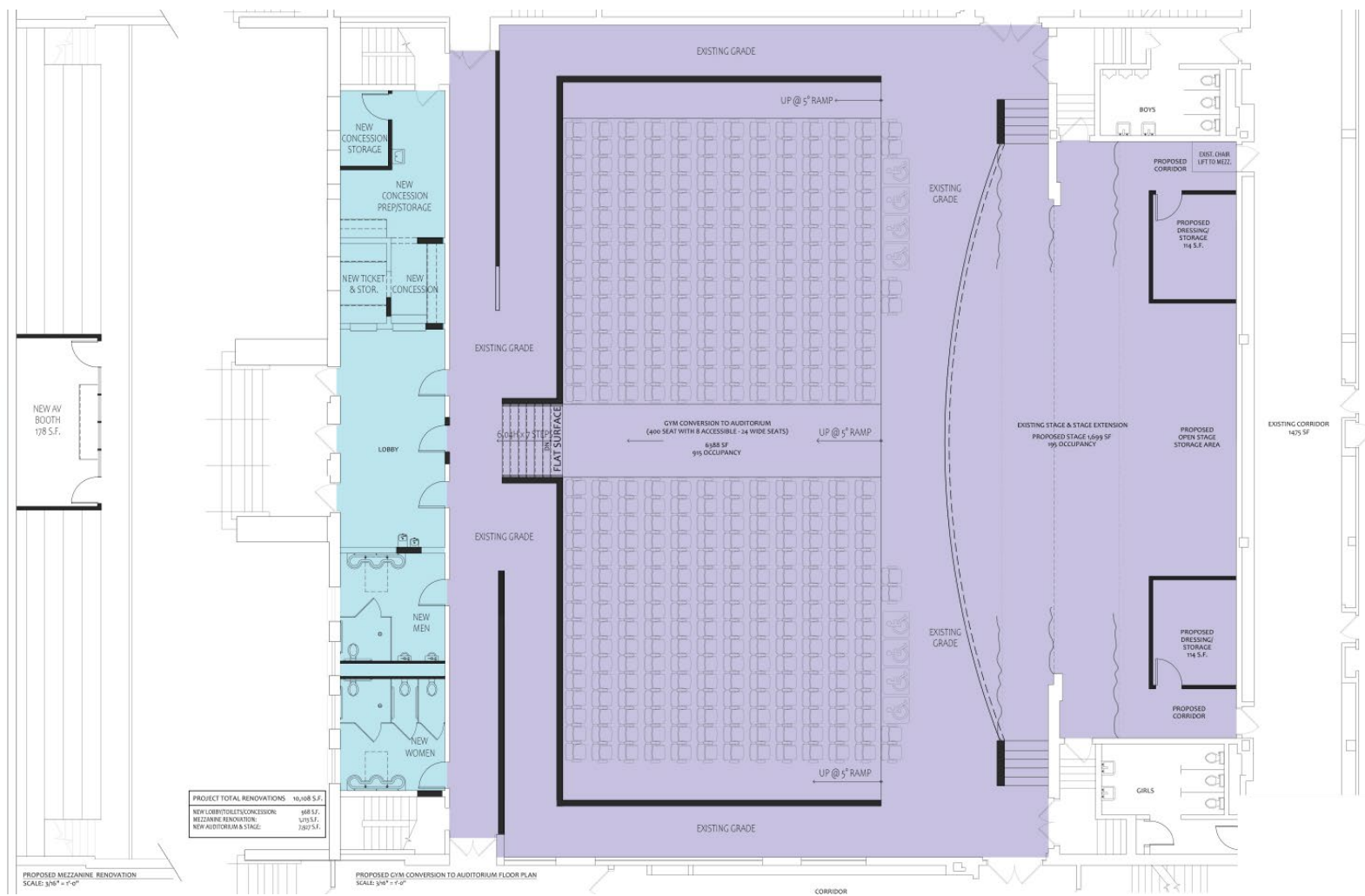




Growing Our District Together

Updated Floorplans Post Community Feedback

Option C: New H.S. Performing Arts, New M.S. Gym (Page 9), New H.S. Gym (Page 10), New Wrestling Room, Locker Rooms, Restrooms and Family Restrooms, Ref. Locker room, Coach Office Space, Wrestling Storage (Page 10)





Your Opinion Means the World to Us

1 Which proposed Referendum Scenario would you support?

Please select all of the options you would support.

- ☐ Option A (Middle School Gym)
- ☐ Option B (M.S. Gym + High School Wrestling)
- ☐ Option C (M.S. Gym + H.S. Wrestling, H.S. Performing Arts, New H.S. Gym)
- ☐ Middle School Parking Addition
- ☐ F.E.S Classroom
- ☐ All of the Above
- ☐ None of the above



2 If you answered "None of the above" on question 1, if adjustments are made to any of the scenarios, would you support one of them?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3 If yes, please provide your suggested adjustments to the scenario you are closet to supporting.

4 What do you like about the proposal options shown today?

5 Has the District provided enough information to determine your support?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6 If no, can you provide details below on what additional information should be provided?
