

Skokie-Morton Grove District 69 Board of Education

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Lincoln Construction Update

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Background

One of the Strategic Plan goals is to:

- Develop a long-range facility plan to support the educational programming.

In February 2016, the Board of Education launched a Master Facility Planning Process that included input from staff, parents, students and community members. The Master Facility Plan was shared with the Board of Education in May 2016, and included a Six-Phase multi-year plan that results in expanded space and modernization of all classrooms. The multi-year plan is expected to take 10+ years to complete. At the June 2016 Board of Education meeting, the Board agreed to move into a design phase for Phases 1 and 2, which included additions to Madison and Edison.

In September 2016, the Board of Education held a Community Information Night to discuss the Master Facility Planning Process, Phases 1 and 2 plans, and financing options. The Board launched Phase 1 in Spring 2017. Phase 1 resulted in:

- an addition of 5 classrooms and a playground at Madison School,
- District professional development and community schools space,
- 2 additional classrooms, a new front entrance, and a gym at Edison

In August 2017, the Board of Education again held a Community Information Night to discuss the Master Facility Planning Process and Phase 2. The Board launched Phase 2 in January 2018. Phase 2 resulted in:

- a driveway extension at Madison,
- a cafeteria addition to Edison,
- renovation of existing interior spaces, renovation of the learning commons (former library) and a new playground at Edison

Following the completion of Phases 1 and 2, the Board conducted stakeholder focus groups to review the original Master Facility Plan and solicit feedback on how it might be updated to reflect the current conditions in the district. The Facilities and Finances Committee discussed the feedback and how to best address the priorities of the district and community in a revised Master Facility Plan. Based on the feedback of the stakeholders, the Facilities and Finance Committee recommended that the Master Facility Plan be re-prioritized to address the needs at Lincoln Junior High School during Phase 3, rather than waiting until a later phase, and the full Board supported that recommendation at their October 16, 2018 meeting.

Over the next 11 months, the District's architects, construction management team, staff, and Board engaged in discussions about how best to address the identified needs at Lincoln Junior High School. Throughout the process, input was sought from staff,

parents, students, and community members. Site visits were conducted, design plan options were considered, and financing options discussed. The Board engaged stakeholders and provided public opportunities for families and the community to provide input on the Lincoln project. These opportunities to engage with the Board were held on the following dates: October 2018, January 2019, March 2019, April 2019, June 2019, and September 2019.

Design Highlights

With safety and security at the forefront of the design process, the plans include a three-story, state of the art building designed specifically to meet the needs of an early adolescent learner today and into the future.

Classrooms are large and intentionally clustered to support the interdisciplinary team structure. Each pair of classrooms share a student break-out space that support small group work. Students academic classes are grouped in the same area to foster peer relationships, team identity, and connection to teachers. Classrooms can spill out into the shared living room spaces designated for each interdisciplinary team. Additionally, this design further encourages and enables teachers to more effectively collaborate with one another. Each interdisciplinary grouping includes a fully outfitted science lab. Student lockers and washrooms are all conveniently located in the team area. Student support services are embedded throughout the building to provide easy access for students and staff.

The building includes specialized spaces to support the Fine Arts, Physical Education, STEM, and Art programs. There are dedicated band, orchestra and general music/choir spaces. The learning commons (library) is designed to be a centrally located hub, supporting the academic program. Incorporated into the center of the building is a learning stair that includes collaboration landings which promotes both academic and social engagement. A fitness room and indoor track complement the two competition sized gymnasiums. The gyms are designed to support PE classes, interscholastic activities, robotics tournaments, and large group presentations/assemblies. The drama room include a teaching lab sound booth and doubles as a performance space that has a capacity for up to 100 audience members.

The cafeteria includes direct access to the outdoors to support an after lunch activity period. The space is designed to support multiple uses including student activities, summer programs, staff professional development and community events.

Finance Update

The budgeted cost of construction of Lincoln Junior High School, including all soft costs, is \$45 million. Similar to previous construction projects, the Board is utilizing a combination of long-term debt and a spend down of reserve funds that were intentionally designated for construction as part of a long-range financial plan. The projected breakdown of financing sources is as follows:

Source of Funds	Amount
Long-term Debt	\$25,000,000
Cash Reserves	\$13,000,000
Alternate Bonds	\$7,000,000
Total	\$45,000,000

The sale of the \$25,000,000 in long-term debt closed on January 14, 2020, and the funds have been deposited for use. The District worked with the Board’s bond advisor to align the repayment of the debt with the expiration of existing debt. As a result, there is projected to be no increase to homeowners’ property tax rate related to the long-term debt issuance.

The \$7,000,000 in alternate bonds will be issued in 2020-21; however, alternate bonds must be repaid from the district’s existing operating budget and have no impact to property taxes.

Timeline

Following the 50% budget review by the construction management company, the administration worked with the architectural team to rearrange space within the building and remove 4,000 square feet from the Lincoln Junior High plans. Architectural plans are scheduled to be 80% complete on January 31, 2020, and 95% complete on February 24, 2020, with budget reviews following both of those phases. The project is scheduled to go out to bid on March 16, 2020, with bid opening, bid approval, and project commencement in April 2020.

Next Steps

District 69 staff and administrators are continuing to meet with the architects and construction managers to refine and finalize the design of the building and develop a plan for preservation of components of the current structure. The process is on track for an April groundbreaking. The construction team continues to monitor the budget as design plans are finalized, and the District prepares to go to bid, which allows for adjustments to be made. Through the process, the Board and administration will continue to monitor the design plans. To date, the project is projected to come in on budget and on time.

The community is encouraged to follow the construction process on the [District 69 website](http://www.sd69.org) (www.sd69.org under About - Construction).