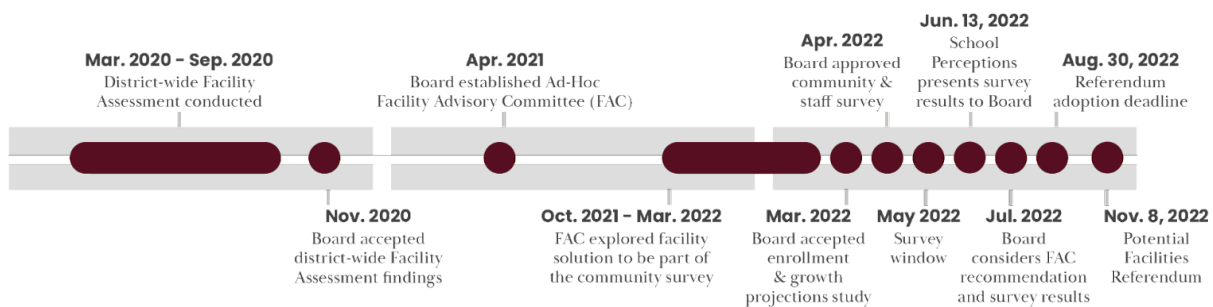




School District of Jefferson | Facility Planning Frequently Asked Questions

Facility Planning

1. **How long has the District been facility planning?** The District's first step in the facility planning process was to hire a firm to conduct a district-wide facility assessment in March 2020.



2. **What is a facility assessment?** A facility assessment is an independent, objective analysis of building and site conditions and an evaluation of the capabilities of the facilities to meet educational and community goals. The facility assessment is often a critical first step in the planning process, helping the district better understand areas of need and deficiency. The document may be used to inform plans for ongoing maintenance, and as a foundation for future master planning or building projects.
3. **What is the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC)?** The Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) is an ad-hoc working group made up of District citizens and staff created by the Board of Education at its meeting in April 2021. The group of 17 is charged with:

- Seeking solutions to the District's facility and grounds needs;
- Reviewing financial, enrollment and budgetary trends;
- Assessing safety and security needs;
- Reviewing other pertinent information.

The FAC began its work in October 2021 and is expected to deliver a final, advisory recommendation to the Board in June 2022. It is expected that the FAC will have met at least 16 times and considered more than 20 different facilities options.

4. **Who is on the FAC?** The community driven committee is made up of community members, business owners, staff, parents, and senior citizens.

5. **How has the District engaged staff and community stakeholders in the facilities planning process?** Our staff and community stakeholders have been, and will continue to be, integral to the facilities planning process. Here are a few example of how staff, community and other stakeholder have helped inform the process:

- **Staff:** During fall 2021, the District's architect held a series of building meetings with staff at each of the District's five buildings. The information held during these meetings was compiled and common themes were identified. The District continues to update staff through the Friday Focus newsletter.
- **Community:** The District has distributed a community-wide survey to all households in the district, allowing residents an opportunity to weigh in on the most critical facilities planning questions under consideration. In addition, at various points in the process, the district has either sent a district wide mailing or engaged the Jefferson Daily Union with a press release with information about the facilities planning process.
- **Key Stakeholders:** The District has continued to maintain a close relationship with the City of Jefferson and other important stakeholders as the facilities planning process unfolds.

6. **What facilities options did the FAC explore?**

Dots	Option	Description	Survey
2	1A	Minimal renovation at East	Did not move forward
3	1B	Major renovation at East	Did not move forward
3	1C	Major renovation / Early Child addition at East	Included in Pathway 2
4	1D	650 student addition / renovation at East	Did not move forward
7	1E	West Elementary repurposed into District Office and Alternative Education	<i>Relient on 1D which did not move forward</i>
12	1F	Repurpose District office into PAC support spaces	Additional Project (<i>reliant on a District office addition somewhere</i>)
7	2A	Minimal renovation at Sullivan	Base Plan
8	2B	Major renovation at Sullivan	Additional Project
2	3A	Minimal renovation at West	Did not move forward
4	3B	Major renovation at West	Included in Pathway 2
1	3C	650 student addition / renovation at West	See below
10	3D	650 student + District Office addition / renovation at West	Moved DO addition to an Additional project and surveyed consolidation of East and West at the West site as Pathway 1
8	4A	Collab renovation at Middle School	Included in Pathway 2
15	5A	Tech renovation/addition at High School	Base Plan
8	5B	Fitness renovation/addition at High School	Additional Projects from these discussions
2	5C	Academic renovation - band room at High School	Did not move forward
8	5D	Academic addition - stairs at High School	Base Plan
1	Add'l 1	New two-section elementary school (replaces East or West)	Did not move forward
8	Add'l 2	New four-section elementary school (combines East and West)	Continued to discuss- Did not survey
0	Add'l 3	Artificial turf football field at High School	Did not move forward
6	Add'l 4	Press box at High School	Did not move forward

Also included in the Base plan was Capital Maintenance Priority 1-2 on all buildings

Building Questions

7. **What are modern learning and collaboration spaces?** Twenty-first century learning environments strive to focus on student-centered, hands-on, and project-based education. Historically, classrooms focused on the teacher-centric classroom (i.e. a lecture setting with students in rows and the teacher up front). While this structure still has a value in our core of instruction, providing flexibility within the classroom and beyond allows teaching and learning to be dynamic. This encourages students to inquire, ask questions, and collaborate, rather than passively learn. Ways in which modern learning can be incorporated into instructional spaces is through the use of technology, flexible furniture, accessible collaboration space, small group instruction rooms, etc.
8. **How would East Elementary School be renovated if the referendum includes keeping East?** Currently, East Elementary School includes a number of small, inflexible classrooms. Multiple classrooms lack natural light and some services are delivered in basement classrooms. Various Americans with Disabilities Act compliance issues exist. Plus, the school lacks the collaborative learning environments that can support best practice in today's instructional strategies.

Under the proposed plan:

- Several classrooms would be expanded and or renovated
 - Art and Music would be renovated
 - Flexible resource areas would be incorporated into the existing footprint
 - A new 4K and Kindergarten addition would be added (four classrooms total)
 - A new secure main entry sequence would be added
 - Capital maintenance would be performed throughout the building
9. **Why is the District proposing an addition and renovation to the high school trades and agriculture area?** Jefferson's agriculture, trades and technology courses are high demand programs. JHS has not only been increasing in student enrollment but also the number of course offerings.

School Year	Number of Ag/Tech Ed Courses Offered	Student enrollment in Ag/Tech Ed Courses
2015-2016	11	146
2016-2017	9	150
2017-2018 & 2018-2019	Not archived	
2019-2020	14	262
2020-2021	15	248
2021-2022	16	262

There is limited space in the existing high school for this growing group of programs. Space for large and small animals is limited; storage for student projects is a challenge and there is minimal space for a high quality foods education program. Renovating and expanding the available space for agriculture, trades and technology will allow the district to expand program offerings to its students. These facilities will support the idea of college AND career readiness, ensuring that Jefferson best prepares all its future graduates.

Survey/ Options

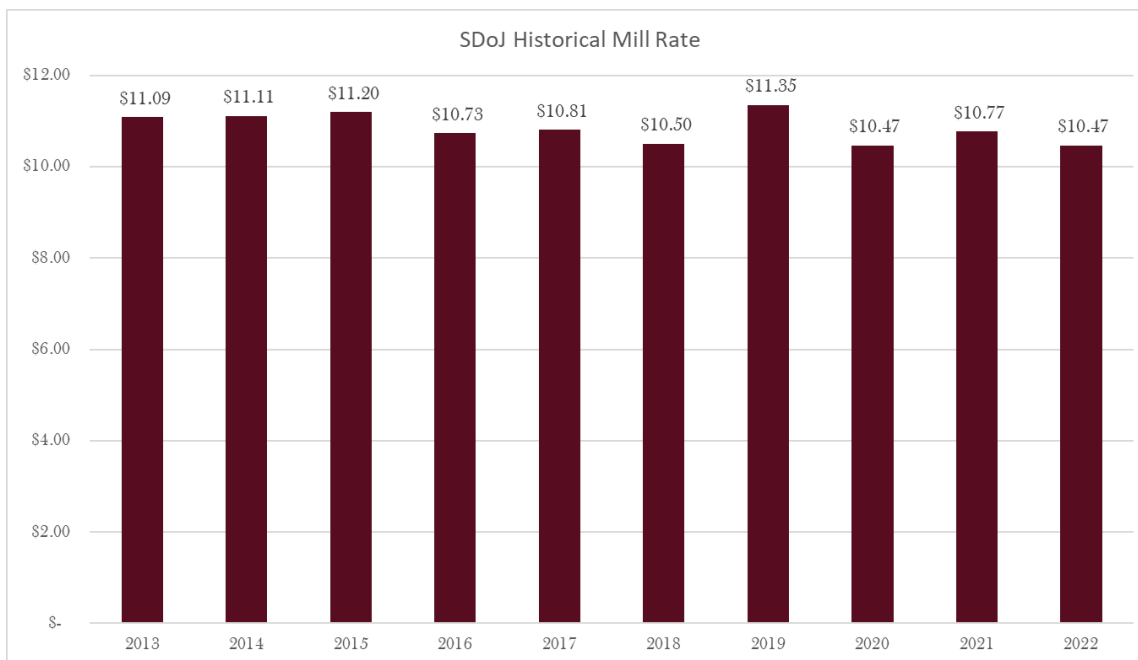
1. **Did the FAC explore building a new elementary school?** Yes, the FAC did consider building new, but the cost was deemed prohibitive to address district-wide needs. To replace just East or West with the current student population, the cost was estimated to be \$34.6 million. To replace a combined East and West with the current student population, the cost was estimated to be \$56.3 million.
2. **Did the FAC explore the implications of closing Sullivan Elementary?** Yes, the District and FAC discussed whether closing Sullivan would be a financial benefit to Jefferson schools. After factoring the open enrollment of students from the Sullivan area (currently 255 students), the District estimates a 10-year operational **loss** of \$7.5-\$9.2 million.
3. **Who received the community survey? Are the survey results confidential?** One paper copy of the survey was mailed to each household in the district. District residents with multiple adults in the household have the option of receiving an additional copy (copies) of the survey by contacting the district office (920-675-1000). All survey results are strictly confidential.

Note: US Postal Service routes and school district boundaries do not perfectly overlap. The district has done its best to supplement USPS mailing lists to ensure that households are not missed. That said, please contact us if you or someone you know is not getting our mail.

Financial

1. **What is a mill rate?** School district property taxes include levies for general operations, debt service, capital expansion and community services. Property values are equalized to reflect market value rather than local assessed value. The equalized levy rate is the total property tax levy divided by the current year equalized property value with tax incremental financing (TIF) values excluded. Levy rates are shown in "mills" or property tax dollars levied per \$1,000 of equalized property value. [Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction]

2. **What is the District's current mill rate?** The 2021-22 district mill rate is \$10.47.



3. **What is a referendum?** There are two types of referenda school districts use to obtain additional funding: operational and capital.

A capital (facilities) referendum allows a district to issue debt (take out a loan) to pay for major facility projects. Much like a home mortgage, a capital referendum is typically financed over an extended period, often 20 years.

An operating referendum is used to support daily operations and help maintain current programs and services. For many communities, an operating referendum offers a solution to manage funding gaps while keeping 100% of referendum tax dollars in the district and aligned with community expectations for their local schools.

4. **Can the district pay for capital maintenance costs out of its day-to-day operating budget?** The District pays for capital maintenance projects from its day-to-day operating funds. In fact, over the last 3 years, the District has spent an average of over \$800,000 annually on capital maintenance projects.

However, the district faces a significant ongoing capital maintenance need. According to the District's updated Facilities Assessment, the District still faces \$12.2 million in high priority capital maintenance needs over the next 1 to 3 years. It is difficult to address this need without a facilities referendum.

5. **Why is the District considering a facilities referendum?**

The District has identified two significant facilities need that prompted the facilities planning process:

- **Capital Maintenance:** The District does an incredible job maintaining its facilities. However, state law caps the amount of money a school district is able to spend on day-to-day operational expenses. More and more, school districts are allocating operating dollars to the classroom and student services. Increasingly, it's hard to plan for large, expensive capital projects like roof replacements and mechanical systems.

To better understand its capital maintenance needs, the District contracted with Findorff in 2019 to complete a comprehensive Facilities Analysis. That study, completed in late 2020, showed \$26 million in capital maintenance needs over a 10-year period. That amount was later prioritized to reflect the most urgent needs: \$14.2 Million

- **Learning Environments:** The District also recognizes that instruction is delivered in very different ways in today's classrooms. Gone are the days of rote memorization. Rather, students collaborate with one another in small and large group environments. Project-based learning helps to foster communication and creativity. Student-centered learning helps foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The District contracted with EUA to identify ways in which its existing facilities can be renovated to incorporate the modern learning environments that support these current instructional practices.

6. **Why now?** The District used a deliberated, data-driven and community-focused process to identify its facilities needs. Administrators, staff, citizens and consultants came to a similar conclusion: the District presently has capital maintenance needs, such as slate roof repairs and ADA compliance, and should update aging or outdated learning environments (see above).

The District understands that financial conditions feel unstable today. However, compared with today, construction costs and interest rates could be significantly different 5- or 10- years from now. The District is continuing its facilities planning, knowing that its needs are not going away.

7. **When will the 2010 referendum debt be paid off?** The final debt service payment on the High School project will be made on March 1, 2030.
8. **How did you come up with the project budgets and how will the current market impact them moving forward?** We are living in unprecedented times. The

construction industry, like most, is experiencing market forces well outside of what would be considered normal. Material costs and lead times have risen to never-before-seen levels. Findorff works hard to monitor these issues to produce estimates and schedules that reflect current market conditions. There are numerous sources nationally that provide current data that we combine with feedback from our local vendors to create those estimates and schedules.

Likewise, we are tuned into economic forecasts, both for the construction industry specifically and the economy in general. Using that information helps identify the potential impact inflation may have on project costs into the future. We build in inflationary factors to our budgets to offset potential market changes but predicting the future with any level of certainty is impossible. We use the information we monitor to help inform our cost forecasts.

Referendum budgets are based on very conceptual plans which allow for options once design progresses. As the price of materials change we analyze those options to work with our design partners to choose systems with the best cost and least instability, both from a cost and lead time perspective. It is a careful balancing act and we work hard to ensure quality is not sacrificed. Findorff's goal is to inform the District so the best financial decisions can be made while honoring the commitment made to taxpayers.

9. **How much in operational savings would the District avoid over a 10-year period if East Elementary School was closed?** The District estimates a potential 10-year total cost avoidance if East closes to be \$8.8 to \$9.5 million.