



Mount Pleasant Community School District

— AD HOC FACILITY COMMITTEE —



PREPARED FOR:

**School Board
Mount Pleasant
Community School District**

January 26, 2026

Dear Board Members,

Attached is the final report of the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee, established by Board resolution to support a structured, community-informed exploration of the district's elementary facilities.

This report reflects the completion of the committee's charge. Between October and December, committee members engaged in a deliberate, multi-step process that included community input, visioning, facility tours, and scenario analysis. Throughout this work, the committee operated in an advisory role, with the understanding that decisions regarding facilities, funding, and implementation rest with the Board of Education.

The report is intended to support Board discussion by:

- Documenting the committee's process and engagement efforts
- Articulating shared values and decision guardrails that emerged
- Presenting four distinct elementary facilities scenarios identified for deeper consideration
- Clearly outlining the strengths, concerns, tradeoffs, and questions associated with each scenario

The committee did not rank scenarios or recommend a preferred option. Instead, it sought to illuminate the choices before the Board and clarify the implications inherent in each path forward.

The Board is not being asked to make a final decision at this time. Rather, this report is provided to inform discussion, identify areas where additional analysis may be helpful, and support thoughtful consideration of next steps.

We appreciate the time, care, and commitment shown by committee members and community participants throughout this process. Their work provides a strong foundation as the Board continues its deliberations on behalf of the district and community.

Please let us know if you have questions or would like additional information as you review the report.

Sincerely,



Stephen F. Murley

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

- 1.1 Purpose of the Report
- 1.2 Overview of the Committee Process
- 1.3 The North Star and Decision Guardrails
- 1.4 Summary of the Four Scenarios
- 1.5 What the Board Is Being Asked to Consider

Background and Charge to the Committee

- 2.1 Board Resolution and Scope of Work
- 2.2 Role of the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee
- 2.3 What the Committee Was Asked to Do and Not Do

Community and Committee Engagement Process

- 3.1 October 16, 2025 Community Meeting
- 3.2 October 22, 2025 Committee Visioning Session
- 3.3 November 12, 2025 Attendance Center and Fort Madison Tours
- 3.4 November 18, 2025 Current Reality Review
- 3.5 December 9, 2025 and December 15, 2025 Central Campus Tours
- 3.6 December 18, 2025 Scenario Development Session
- 3.7 Process Guardrails and Transparency Commitments

Shared Values and Decision Guardrails

- 4.1 The Elementary Facilities North Star
- 4.2 Non-Negotiables Identified by the Committee
- 4.3 Tensions the Committee Acknowledged but Did Not Resolve

What the Committee Consistently Heard

- 5.1 Safety, Security, and Space Limitations
- 5.2 Equity of Student Experience Across Buildings
- 5.3 Staffing and Operational Impacts
- 5.4 Community Identity and Stewardship
- 5.5 Long-Term Sustainability Considerations

Scenario Development and Selection Process

- 6.1 Generation of Multiple Facility Scenarios
- 6.2 Voting Results and Rationale for Advancing Four Scenarios
- 6.3 Overview of the Four Scenarios Selected for Analysis

Scenario Analysis

- 7.1 Scenario A: PK–5 Central Campus with Daycare

- 7.2 Scenario B: Close Three Elementary Buildings and Operate Two Elementary Schools
- 7.3 Scenario C: Close All Elementary Schools and Reconfigure the Middle School
- 7.4 Scenario D: Maintain All Elementary Schools with Incremental Improvements

Committee Conclusions and Board Readiness Statement

- 8.1 Areas of Alignment Across Scenarios
- 8.2 Key Differences the Board Will Need to Weigh
- 8.3 Statement of Board Readiness and Advisory Role

What Comes Next

- 9.1 Decisions Reserved for the Board
- 9.2 Additional Analysis That May Be Required
- 9.3 Communication and Community Engagement Considerations

Appendices

- A. Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Resolution
- B. Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Members
- C. Facilities Planning Process Timeline
- D. Meeting Agendas and Session Outlines
- E. Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Ideation Summary
- F. Scenario Analysis Worksheet Template
- G. Scenario One-Page Summaries
- H. Scenario Comparison

Executive Summary

1.1 Purpose of the Report

The Mount Pleasant Community School District Board of Education established the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee to engage community members and stakeholders in a structured exploration of the district's elementary facilities and to help inform future Board decision-making. This report summarizes the committee's work and presents the outcomes of that process.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Document the committee's process and engagement efforts
- Articulate the shared values and decision guardrails that emerged
- Present four facility scenarios identified by the committee as warranting deeper consideration
- Clearly outline the strengths, concerns, and tradeoffs associated with each scenario

This report does not recommend a preferred option or rank the scenarios. Rather, it is intended to provide the Board with clear, credible, and community-informed information to support its deliberations and next steps.

1.2 Overview of the Committee Process

The Ad Hoc Facilities Committee conducted its work between October and December through a series of structured meetings and engagement activities designed to build shared understanding, surface community priorities, and explore future possibilities. The process emphasized transparency, inclusion, and disciplined facilitation.

Key elements of the process included:

- A public community meeting on October 16 to gather initial input and establish a shared context
- A committee working session on October 22 focused on defining the ideal elementary experience and identifying core values
- A follow-up session on November 18 to examine current realities, facility limitations, and gaps between present conditions and desired outcomes
- Tours of current elementary attendance centers, Fort Madison Elementary School, and the Central Campus, to ground discussions in firsthand observation
- A final working session on December 18, in which committee members generated, voted on, and analyzed future facility scenarios

Throughout the process, participants were consistently reminded that the committee's role was advisory. Decisions regarding facilities, funding, and implementation were explicitly reserved for the Board of Education.

1.3 The North Star and Decision Guardrails

As part of its work, the committee developed and refined a shared "North Star" statement to guide discussion and frame decision-making. This statement reflects the values the committee believes should anchor future elementary facilities decisions:

- Every Mount Pleasant Community School District elementary student learns and grows in safe, secure, and welcoming spaces designed to support curiosity, belonging, and equitable opportunities, reflecting our community's shared care, commitment, and stewardship today, and for generations to come.

From this North Star, several decision guardrails consistently emerged during committee discussions. These guardrails do not dictate outcomes but provide a lens through which options can be evaluated. They include:

- Safety and security are fundamental expectations for all facilities
- Equity of student experience across buildings matters more than convenience or tradition
- Facilities should support effective teaching, staffing stability, and operational efficiency
- Students benefit from dedicated, functional learning spaces rather than shared or repurposed areas
- Long-term stewardship and sustainability must be considered alongside immediate needs

These guardrails frame the tradeoffs inherent in any facilities decision and help clarify what the community values most.

1.4 Summary of the Four Scenarios

During the December 18 working session, committee members generated multiple potential scenarios for organizing elementary facilities. Participants then individually voted to identify which options merited deeper analysis. Two scenarios received the highest level of support (30 votes each), followed by two additional scenarios with 16 and 14 votes. Given the clear drop-off in support beyond these options, the committee focused its final analysis on the four scenarios summarized below.

Each scenario represents a distinct approach to organizing elementary facilities. None is presented as a recommendation.

- Scenario A: PK–5 Central Campus with Daycare
This scenario would consolidate elementary programming into a central PK–5 campus, potentially incorporating early childhood and daycare services. It focuses on long-term flexibility, centralized resources, and expanded program opportunities.
- Scenario B: Close Three Elementary Buildings and Operate Two Elementary Schools
This scenario would reduce the number of elementary buildings by closing Salem, Harlan, and Lincoln, while operating two elementary schools with grade-band organization. It emphasizes consolidation, equity of access, and operational efficiency.
- Scenario C: Close All Elementary Schools and Reconfigure the Middle School
This scenario would close all existing elementary buildings and reconfigure the middle school to serve elementary grades. It represents a transformational approach with significant implications for facilities use, community identity, and student experience.
- Scenario D: Maintain All Elementary Schools with Incremental Improvements
This scenario would continue operating all current elementary schools while making targeted, short-term improvements to address identified issues. It prioritizes neighborhood schools and minimizes disruption but maintains existing structural challenges.

Each of these scenarios is explored in greater detail later in this report using a consistent framework.

1.5 What the Board Is Being Asked to Consider

With the completion of the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee’s work, the Board of Education is now positioned to lead the next phase of decision-making. The committee reached consensus that the four scenarios outlined in this report:

- Reflect the full body of work conducted since October
- Represent meaningfully different approaches to organizing elementary facilities
- Surface important strengths, concerns, and tradeoffs
- Are ready for Board-level discussion and further analysis

The Board is not being asked to select a final solution at this stage. Rather, the Board is being asked to:

- Determine which scenario or scenarios warrant additional technical, financial, and operational analysis
- Consider how the identified tradeoffs align with district priorities and long-term stewardship
- Decide how and when to continue engaging the community as the process moves forward

The committee’s work concludes with this report. Responsibility for evaluating options and making decisions now rests with the Board of Education.

Background and Charge to the Committee

2.1 Board Resolution and Scope of Work

In response to ongoing facility challenges, community questions, and the need for long-term planning, the Mount Pleasant Community School District Board of Education formally established an Ad Hoc Facilities Committee through Board resolution. The resolution outlined the purpose, scope, and advisory nature of the committee's work.

The Board charged the committee with:

- Engaging in a structured review of the district's elementary facilities
- Gathering and reflecting community and stakeholder perspectives
- Exploring potential future facility configurations
- Providing informed input to support Board decision-making

The resolution made clear that the committee's role was advisory, not decision-making. Authority for approving facility plans, funding strategies, and implementation timelines remained exclusively with the Board of Education.

This scope was intentionally designed to balance broad community engagement with clear governance responsibility.

2.2 Role of the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee

The Ad Hoc Facilities Committee was composed of community members, parents, staff, and stakeholders representing a range of perspectives across the district. The committee was supported by district leadership and an external facilitator to ensure a structured, transparent, and inclusive process.

The committee's role was to:

- Serve as a forum for learning, dialogue, and reflection
- Consider multiple viewpoints and lived experiences
- Identify shared values and areas of tension
- Explore possible future scenarios without advocating for a predetermined outcome

Throughout the process, the committee was reminded that its responsibility was to inform, not to decide. This distinction helped maintain trust, encouraged open dialogue, and allowed participants to engage honestly with difficult questions without feeling pressure to reach consensus on a single solution.

2.3 What the Committee Was Asked to Do and Not Do

From the outset, the Board and facilitation team established clear expectations for the committee's work. These expectations were reinforced consistently across meetings.

The committee was asked to:

- Define what an ideal elementary experience should look like for all students
- Examine current facilities and identify gaps between present conditions and desired outcomes
- Consider how safety, equity, staffing, and sustainability intersect with facility decisions
- Generate and explore multiple future scenarios
- Identify strengths, concerns, and tradeoffs associated with each scenario

The committee was not asked to:

- Select or recommend a preferred facility option
- Rank scenarios or advocate for specific buildings
- Conduct financial or architectural analysis
- Make decisions regarding closures, construction, or funding
- Resolve all tensions or disagreements

By clearly defining both the scope and the limits of the committee's work, the Board ensured that the process remained focused, credible, and aligned with its governance role. This clarity allowed the committee to contribute meaningful insight while preserving the Board's responsibility to make final decisions on behalf of the district and community.

Community and Committee Engagement Process

The Ad Hoc Facilities Committee's work was structured as a multi-stage engagement process designed to move from broad community input to focused committee analysis. Each phase was built intentionally on the previous one, allowing participants to develop a shared understanding before exploring future options.

3.1 October 16 Community Meeting

The process began with a public community meeting held on October 16. The purpose of this meeting was to provide background information, establish transparency, and invite community members to share initial perspectives regarding the district's elementary facilities.

At this meeting, participants were:

- Provided with historical and contextual information about district facilities
- Introduced to the purpose and scope of the facilities planning process
- Invited to share questions, concerns, and hopes related to elementary schools

Community input gathered during this session helped surface early themes related to safety, equity, space limitations, and long-term sustainability. This input also informed subsequent committee discussions and helped establish trust at the outset of the process.

3.2 October 22 Committee Visioning Session

On October 22, the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee convened for its first working session. The focus of this meeting was visioning rather than problem-solving.

Committee members were asked to imagine the ideal elementary experience for students and families and to reflect on questions such as:

- What excellent learning looks like for K–5 students
- What supports help students thrive academically, socially, and emotionally
- How facilities and spaces enhance learning
- How families and the community are engaged
- What makes an elementary system sustainable over time

Participant responses were recorded, clustered, and synthesized to identify common themes. This session resulted in the articulation of shared values and informed the development of an initial "North Star" to guide future discussions.

3.3 November 12 Attendance Center and Fort Madison Tours

On November 12, committee members participated in tours of the district's elementary attendance centers and visited Fort Madison Elementary School. The purpose of these tours was to provide firsthand observation of current conditions and to view a comparative elementary facility outside the district.

During the tours, participants observed:

- Building layout, condition, and use of space
- Opportunities and constraints related to safety and supervision
- How instructional and support spaces function in daily practice

Observations from these tours were intended to ground future discussion in lived experience rather than assumptions.

3.4 November 18 Current Reality Review

The committee reconvened on November 18 to examine how current elementary facilities align with the ideal experience identified in October.

This session emphasized reflection and gap identification rather than solutions. Committee members:

- Reviewed observations from attendance center visits
- Reflected on current facility conditions and limitations
- Identified areas where current realities fall short of desired outcomes

Through structured activities, participants named strengths as well as significant gaps related to safety, space, equity, staffing, and operational efficiency. These themes provided critical context for understanding the pressures facing the district and framed the need to explore future options.

3.5 December 9 and December 15 Central Campus Tours

On December 9 and December 15, committee members toured the district's Central Campus. The purpose of these tours was to understand the potential opportunities and constraints of the Central Campus as a future facility option.

During these visits, participants considered:

- Scale, layout, and adaptability of the facility
- Potential uses for instructional, support, and shared spaces
- How the Central Campus might function in relation to elementary programming

Tour reflections were incorporated into the committee's scenario development work, providing additional context for understanding possible future configurations.

3.6 December 18 Scenario Development Session

The committee's final working session took place on December 18 and focused on generating and analyzing future facility scenarios.

During this session:

- Committee members generated multiple potential scenarios for organizing elementary facilities
- Scenarios were presented using clear, plainspoken titles describing structural changes
- Participants voted individually to identify which scenarios merited deeper exploration

Voting results showed a clear distinction between the top four scenarios and those receiving significantly less support. Based on this outcome, the committee analyzed the four highest-voted scenarios using a structured framework that examined strengths, concerns, and tradeoffs.

Importantly, all committee members reviewed and discussed all four scenarios, ensuring shared understanding and balanced input.

3.7 Process Guardrails and Transparency Commitments

Throughout the engagement process, several guardrails were consistently reinforced to maintain trust and transparency. These included:

- Clear communication that the committee's role was advisory
- Explicit reminders that no decisions or recommendations would be made by the committee
- Consistent use of structured protocols to avoid premature conclusions
- Public documentation of meeting materials and summaries

By adhering to these commitments, the district and committee created a process that emphasized openness, discipline, and respect for the Board's governance role. These guardrails helped ensure that the outcomes presented in this report are grounded in authentic engagement and reflective of the committee's collective work.

Shared Values and Decision Guardrails

As the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee moved from visioning to analysis, several shared values and decision guardrails emerged consistently across meetings. These elements helped anchor discussions, provided a common reference point when tradeoffs surfaced, and clarified what the community believes should matter most as elementary facilities decisions are considered. This section summarizes those shared values and guardrails, as well as the tensions the committee acknowledged but did not seek to resolve.

4.1 The Elementary Facilities North Star

Through iterative discussion and refinement, the committee developed a “North Star” statement to guide its work. This statement reflects a shared aspiration for what elementary facilities should support for students, families, and the broader community:

Every Mount Pleasant Community School District elementary student learns and grows in safe, secure, and welcoming spaces designed to support curiosity, belonging, and equitable opportunities, reflecting our community's shared care, commitment, and stewardship today, and for generations to come.

The North Star served as a unifying reference throughout the process. While participants held differing views about how best to achieve this vision, there was broad alignment around the importance of safety, equity, belonging, and long-term stewardship as foundational values.

4.2 Non-Negotiables Identified by the Committee

While the committee did not seek consensus on specific facility solutions, several non-negotiable principles consistently surfaced during discussion. These principles functioned as decision guardrails rather than prescriptive requirements.

Across meetings, committee members repeatedly emphasized that:

- Safety and security are fundamental expectations for any elementary facility and must be addressed proactively rather than reactively.
- Equity of student experience across buildings matters more than maintaining differences rooted in history, location, or tradition.
- Dedicated, functional learning spaces support better instruction and student outcomes than shared or repurposed spaces.
- Facilities influence staffing stability, including recruitment, retention, and day-to-day working conditions for educators and support staff.
- Operational efficiency and sustainability must be considered alongside community preferences and short-term fixes.

- Long-term stewardship requires planning not only for current needs, but for future generations of students and families.

These guardrails helped participants evaluate scenarios through a consistent lens and reinforced the importance of aligning facility decisions with student-centered outcomes.

4.3 Tensions the Committee Acknowledged but Did Not Resolve

In addition to areas of alignment, the committee openly acknowledged several tensions that could not be resolved through discussion alone. These tensions reflect real tradeoffs inherent in facilities planning and underscore the complexity of the decisions facing the Board.

Key tensions identified by the committee include:

- Neighborhood identity versus equity of access to facilities and programs
- Maintaining multiple buildings versus the benefits of consolidation and shared resources
- Emotional attachment to schools versus long-term financial and operational sustainability
- Incremental improvement versus transformational change
- Centralized facilities versus distributed community presence

The committee did not attempt to resolve these tensions or determine which should carry more weight. Instead, participants recognized that navigating these tradeoffs is a core responsibility of governance and leadership.

By naming these tensions explicitly, the committee sought to provide the Board with a clearer understanding of the competing priorities embedded in each scenario and the importance of thoughtful, transparent decision-making.

What the Committee Consistently Heard

Across all meetings and engagement activities, several themes emerged repeatedly and consistently. While individual perspectives varied, these themes appeared across community input, committee discussions, site visits, and scenario analysis. Together, they describe the underlying conditions shaping the district's elementary facilities conversation.

5.1 Safety, Security, and Space Limitations

Safety and security were central to nearly every discussion. Committee members consistently noted that current elementary facilities face limitations related to building design, aging infrastructure, and space constraints.

Participants expressed concern that:

- Shared-use spaces, such as gyms serving as cafeterias, limit both instructional and student experience opportunities
- Building layouts in some schools make supervision and secure access more challenging
- Space constraints restrict flexibility for programming, small-group instruction, and student support services

While incremental improvements can address some issues, committee members repeatedly questioned whether existing buildings can fully meet modern safety, security, and space expectations without more significant change.

5.2 Equity of Student Experience Across Buildings

Equity of experience across elementary schools emerged as a strong and persistent theme. Committee members recognized that students currently experience different physical environments, access to resources, and learning conditions depending on which building they attend.

Concerns raised included:

- Variability in classroom size, configuration, and condition
- Uneven access to specialized spaces and programming
- Differences in building capacity to support student needs

Participants consistently emphasized that where a student lives should not determine the quality of their educational environment. This recognition influenced the committee's willingness to explore scenarios that would create more consistent experiences across students and families.

5.3 Staffing and Operational Impacts

Committee discussions frequently returned to the impact facilities have on staffing and daily operations. Members noted that facilities influence not only student experience, but also the ability to recruit, retain, and support staff.

Key considerations included:

- The challenge of staffing multiple small buildings efficiently
- The operational complexity of duplicating services and programming across sites
- The impact of space limitations on collaboration, planning, and student support

Participants acknowledged that facilities decisions carry direct implications for instructional quality, staff workload, and operational efficiency.

5.4 Community Identity and Stewardship

Community identity and connection to schools surfaced as deeply held values. Many participants spoke about schools as anchors of neighborhoods and sources of pride, history, and connection.

At the same time, committee members also framed stewardship as a responsibility to the broader community, including:

- Responsible use of public resources
- Ensuring facilities serve current and future students well
- Balancing emotional attachment with long-term community benefit

This dual lens of identity and stewardship helped explain why facilities conversations can be both meaningful and difficult, and why transparency and care are essential in decision-making.

5.5 Long-Term Sustainability Considerations

Across meetings, committee members consistently expressed concern about long-term sustainability. Participants recognized that decisions made today will shape the district's ability to serve students effectively for decades.

Sustainability considerations included:

- The financial and operational viability of maintaining multiple aging buildings
- The ability to adapt facilities to changing enrollment, programming, and instructional needs
- Planning for future generations rather than deferring difficult decisions

Committee members acknowledged that maintaining the status quo carries consequences, just as significant changes do. This understanding reinforced the importance of examining multiple scenarios and clearly articulating their tradeoffs.

Scenario Development and Selection Process

With shared values established and current realities clearly articulated, the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee turned its attention to exploring possible future configurations for elementary facilities. The intent of this phase was not to narrow prematurely to a single solution, but to surface a range of viable options and examine their implications.

6.1 Generation of Multiple Facility Scenarios

During the December 18 working session, committee members were asked to generate potential scenarios for organizing elementary facilities. This activity was intentionally designed to be open-ended and participant-driven.

Working in small groups, committee members:

- Proposed multiple future facility configurations
- Used clear, plainspoken titles to describe each scenario
- Focused on structural organization rather than implementation details

Participants were instructed to avoid debating feasibility, cost, or preference at this stage. The goal was to ensure that a wide range of ideas, including incremental, transformational, and status quo-oriented approaches, were visible and considered.

This approach resulted in the generation of several distinct scenarios representing different philosophies about consolidation, distribution of schools, and long-term use of facilities.

6.2 Voting Results and Rationale for Advancing Four Scenarios

Following scenario generation, committee members individually voted to identify which options warranted deeper analysis. Each participant was given multiple votes to indicate which scenarios merited deeper exploration, not to express preference or endorsement.

The voting results revealed a clear pattern:

- Two scenarios received the highest level of support, with 30 votes each
- Two additional scenarios received 16 and 14 votes, respectively
- There was a significant drop in support for remaining options, with the next highest scenario receiving 6 votes

Based on this distribution, the committee determined that four scenarios had received sufficient support to warrant structured analysis. Advancing four scenarios reflected both the strength of participant input and the committee's commitment to transparency and inclusivity.

Importantly, this decision was procedural rather than preferential. Advancing four scenarios ensured that the range of community perspectives reflected in the voting results was honored and examined.

6.3 Overview of the Four Scenarios Selected for Analysis

The four scenarios advanced for analysis represent distinct approaches to organizing elementary facilities. Each scenario was examined using the same framework, focusing on strengths, concerns, and key tradeoffs. The scenarios are summarized below and explored in detail in Section 7.

Scenario A: PK–5 Central Campus with Daycare

This scenario consolidates elementary programming into a centralized PK–5 campus and incorporates early childhood and daycare services. It focuses on long-term flexibility, centralized resources, and expanded program opportunities.

Scenario B: Close Three Elementary Buildings and Operate Two Elementary Schools

This scenario consolidates elementary programming into two schools by closing Salem, Harlan, and Lincoln. It emphasizes grade-band organization, operational efficiency, and greater equity of student experience across buildings.

Scenario C: Close All Elementary Schools and Reconfigure the Middle School

This scenario represents a transformational approach in which all elementary buildings are closed and the middle school is reconfigured to serve elementary grades. It carries significant implications for facilities use, community identity, and student experience.

Scenario D: Maintain All Elementary Schools with Incremental Improvements

This scenario continues the operation of all current elementary schools while addressing identified needs through targeted, short-term improvements. It prioritizes neighborhood schools and minimizes immediate disruption, while maintaining existing building configurations.

Each of these scenarios was explored by all committee members during the December 18 session. No scenario was ranked or recommended, and all were evaluated through a consistent lens to support balanced understanding.

Scenario Analysis

Each of the four scenarios advanced by the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee is presented below using the same structure and analytical lens. The intent of this section is to describe each scenario, identify potential strengths, surface concerns and challenges, and clarify key tradeoffs the Board may need to consider.

No scenario is recommended or ranked. All four were examined by committee members during the December 18 working session and reflect community-informed perspectives.

7.1 Scenario A: PK-5 Central Campus with Daycare

Description

Under this scenario, elementary programming would be consolidated into a centralized PK-5 campus, potentially incorporating early childhood and daycare services. This model leverages a single site to house all elementary grades and related programming.

What Works Well

- Creates a unified elementary experience for all students
- Allows for centralized resources, programming, and support services
- Offers flexibility for future program expansion or adaptation
- Presents opportunities for co-located early childhood services

Concerns and Challenges

- Represents a significant departure from current attendance center models
- Requires substantial transition planning for students, families, and staff
- Concentrates all elementary students at a single site
- Raises questions about transportation, scale, and community presence

Key Tradeoffs for Board Consideration

This scenario prioritizes consistency, flexibility, and long-term planning while requiring major structural change. The Board would need to weigh the benefits of a centralized model against concerns about scale, access, and community connection.

7.2 Scenario B: Close Three Elementary Buildings and Operate Two Elementary Schools

Description

This scenario would consolidate elementary programming into two schools by closing Salem, Harlan, and Lincoln. Students would attend one of two remaining elementary buildings, likely

organized by grade bands. The Central Campus would not be used for elementary instruction under this option.

What Works Well

- Reduces the number of elementary facilities requiring maintenance and staffing
- Creates greater consistency in student experience across buildings
- Allows for more efficient use of staff and resources
- Addresses some space and programming limitations through consolidation

Concerns and Challenges

- Results in the closure of multiple neighborhood schools
- May increase transportation time for some students
- Requires careful planning to manage transitions and community impact
- Does not leverage the Central Campus as an instructional site

Key Tradeoffs for Board Consideration

This scenario emphasizes efficiency and equity while requiring difficult decisions about school closures and community identity. The Board would need to balance operational benefits with the social and emotional impacts of consolidation.

7.3 Scenario C: Close All Elementary Schools and Reconfigure the Middle School

Description

This scenario would close all existing elementary buildings and reconfigure the middle school to serve elementary grades. Elementary programming would be relocated to a repurposed middle school facility.

What Works Well

- Consolidates elementary instruction into a single facility
- Eliminates the need to maintain multiple elementary buildings
- Allows for reimagining space use within an existing structure
- Addresses some safety and space concerns through consolidation

Concerns and Challenges

- Represents a highly transformational change to current school configurations
- Requires significant redesign and repurposing of the middle school
- Alters established grade-level pathways and transitions
- May raise concerns about the appropriateness of the space for younger students

Key Tradeoffs for Board Consideration

This scenario emphasizes consolidation and reuse of existing facilities while introducing substantial structural and cultural change. The Board would need to consider whether the benefits of repurposing outweigh the challenges of reconfiguring grade-level environments.

7.4 Scenario D: Maintain All Elementary Schools with Incremental Improvements

Description

Under this scenario, the district would continue to operate all current elementary schools. Identified needs would be addressed through targeted, incremental improvements to existing buildings rather than through consolidation or reconfiguration. The overall structure of elementary attendance centers would remain largely unchanged.

What Works Well

- Preserves neighborhood schools and existing attendance patterns
- Minimizes disruption for students, families, and staff
- Maintains strong community identity tied to individual schools
- Avoids immediate large-scale structural change

Concerns and Challenges

- Does not fully address longstanding space, safety, and facility limitations
- Requires ongoing investment across multiple aging buildings
- Maintains variability in student experience across schools
- Limits opportunities for operational efficiencies

Key Tradeoffs for Board Consideration

This scenario prioritizes stability and continuity while accepting continued inequities and structural limitations. The Board would need to weigh the value of maintaining the status quo against the long-term implications of deferred or distributed investment.

Committee Conclusions and Board Readiness Statement

The Ad Hoc Facilities Committee did not seek to resolve all differences or recommend a single course of action. Instead, the committee's work culminated in clarifying areas of alignment, identifying key differences among viable options, and preparing the Board to engage in informed decision-making.

8.1 Areas of Alignment Across Scenarios

While the four scenarios represent distinct approaches to organizing elementary facilities, committee discussions revealed several areas of alignment that cut across all options. These areas reflect shared understanding rather than consensus on outcomes.

Across scenarios, committee members consistently agreed that:

- Safety and security must be addressed as foundational requirements, regardless of facility configuration
- Equity of student experience is a central concern and should inform future decisions
- Facilities shape instruction, staffing, and student support, not just physical space
- The status quo carries consequences, and maintaining current conditions requires ongoing tradeoffs
- Long-term stewardship should guide decisions alongside immediate community impacts

These areas of alignment provide a common foundation for Board discussion, even as specific approaches differ.

8.2 Key Differences the Board Will Need to Weigh

The committee recognized that the four scenarios differ meaningfully in how they prioritize competing values and manage tradeoffs. These differences cannot be resolved through analysis alone and will require governance judgment.

Key differences the Board will need to weigh include:

- Stability versus transformation: incremental change compared to significant structural reconfiguration
- Neighborhood identity versus system-wide equity: localized schools compared to more centralized models
- Distributed facilities versus consolidation: multiple buildings versus fewer or single-site approaches
- Short-term disruption versus long-term flexibility: immediate community impact compared to future adaptability

- Scale and access considerations: how facility size and location affect student experience and transportation

The committee did not attempt to determine which priorities should outweigh others. Instead, it sought to surface these differences clearly so they can be addressed transparently.

8.3 Statement of Board Readiness and Advisory Role

At the conclusion of its work, the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee reached an agreement that:

- The four scenarios presented in this report accurately reflect the committee's discussions and analysis
- The scenarios are meaningfully different and represent a range of viable approaches
- The strengths, concerns, and tradeoffs associated with each scenario have been clearly articulated
- The scenarios are ready for Board-level discussion and further evaluation

The committee's role was advisory and is now complete. Responsibility for determining next steps, including whether additional analysis is needed and which options may advance, rests with the Board of Education.

By documenting its work in this report, the committee seeks to support the Board in making thoughtful, transparent decisions that reflect community values and long-term stewardship of district resources.

With the conclusion of this report, the committee disbands, and all subsequent decisions and actions rest with the Board of Education.

What Comes Next

With the completion of the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee's work, the district enters the next phase of facilities planning. This phase shifts from exploration and synthesis to governance-level consideration and decision-making.

9.1 Decisions Reserved for the Board

The Board of Education retains full authority for determining the direction of future elementary facilities planning. Decisions reserved for the Board include, but are not limited to:

- Whether one or more of the four scenarios should advance for further study
- Whether additional scenarios should be modified, combined, or eliminated
- The scope and timing of any future facilities planning or implementation steps
- The sequencing of decisions related to facilities, programming, and funding

The committee's work is intended to inform these decisions, not to limit or predetermine them.

9.2 Additional Analysis That May Be Required

As the Board considers next steps, additional analysis may be necessary to support informed decision-making. Depending on the direction the Board chooses, this may include:

- Detailed facility condition assessments or space utilization studies
- Financial analysis, including cost estimates and long-term operational impacts
- Transportation and scheduling implications
- Staffing and programming considerations
- Regulatory, safety, and accessibility requirements

The committee did not conduct this level of technical analysis as part of its charge. Such work, if pursued, would be undertaken at the Board's direction.

9.3 Communication and Community Engagement Considerations

Committee members consistently emphasized the importance of clear, transparent communication as the process continues. Community trust was strengthened during the committee's work through openness, consistency, and clearly defined roles.

As decisions move forward, considerations for ongoing communication may include:

- Sharing how committee input is being used to inform Board discussions
- Clearly distinguishing between exploration, analysis, and decision-making phases
- Providing timely updates as additional information becomes available
- Creating opportunities for continued community understanding and engagement

Thoughtful communication will remain essential as the district navigates complex decisions that affect students, families, staff, and the broader Mount Pleasant community.

Appendix A. Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Resolution

Appendix A. Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Resolution

Appendix B. Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Members

Alexandra Achen	Alan Magnani
Mark Adams	Josh Maher
Stacie Baccam	Levon Mullen
Matt Barton	Lisa Oetken
Ben Baxter	Allie Remick
Brandon Beauchamp	Brent Rich
Kelsey Bolin	Kate Ridinger
Jacque Bowlin	Tyler Rodgers
James Bryant	Katie Sands
Kelly Burgmeier	Kurt Schinstock
Angie Butler	Aimee Shepherd
Anne Davidson	Matt Shull
Amanda Dunn	Jeff Sitar
Mason Fraker	Yesenia Sosa
Heather Goetsch	Jodi Taylor
Bob Griffith	Jill Taylor
Ashley Hobbs	Chris Van De Berg
Kadie Johannson	Chad Venghaus
Ed Kropa	Cody Welch
Abby Liechty	Katie Westphal
Ashley Lohmann	Denise Wolfe

Appendix C. Facilities Planning Process Timeline

The Ad Hoc Facilities Committee engaged in a multi-stage process between October and December designed to move from broad community input to focused scenario analysis. Each meeting and tour was built intentionally on the work of the previous step in the process.

October 16, 2025 — Community Meeting

Purpose: To provide background information, establish transparency, and gather initial community input related to elementary facilities.

Key Focus:

- Sharing context about district facilities and enrollment
- Clarifying the purpose and scope of the facilities planning process
- Inviting community questions, concerns, and perspectives

October 22, 2025 — Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Visioning Session

Purpose: To define the ideal elementary experience and establish shared values to guide future discussion.

Key Focus:

- Identifying what excellent learning looks like for elementary students
- Exploring how facilities support learning, safety, and belonging
- Beginning development of a shared “North Star”

November 12, 2025 — Attendance Center and Fort Madison Tours

Purpose: To provide committee members with firsthand observation of current elementary facilities and a comparative elementary school outside the district.

Key Focus:

- Observing building layout, condition, and use of space
- Considering safety, supervision, and functionality
- Viewing alternative facility configurations and practices
- Grounding future discussions in direct observation

November 18, 2025 — Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Current Reality Review

Purpose: To examine current elementary facilities and identify gaps between present conditions and desired outcomes.

Key Focus:

- Reflecting on current facility strengths and limitations
- Identifying gaps related to safety, space, equity, and operations
- Grounding future discussions in current realities

December 9 and December 15, 2025 — Central Campus Tours

Purpose: To understand the opportunities and constraints of the Central Campus as a potential future facility option.

Key Focus:

- Observing scale, layout, and adaptability of the facility
- Considering potential instructional, support, and shared spaces
- Exploring how the Central Campus could function in relation to elementary programming
- Informing subsequent scenario development

December 18, 2025 — Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Scenario Development Session

Purpose: To generate, vote on, and analyze potential future elementary facilities scenarios.

Key Focus:

- Generating multiple facility organization scenarios
- Voting to identify scenarios warranting deeper exploration
- Analyzing four scenarios for strengths, concerns, and tradeoffs
- Preparing scenarios for Board-level consideration

Process Completion

With the conclusion of the December 18 session, the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee completed its charge. The outcomes of this work are documented in this report to support the Board of Education's next phase of decision-making.

Appendix D. Meeting Agendas and Session Outlines

The following agendas document the structure and focus of each community and committee meeting conducted as part of the elementary facilities planning process. These materials are provided for reference and transparency and reflect the planned flow of each session as shared with participants.

October 16, 2025 — Community Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and introductions
- Purpose of the meeting and overview of the planning process
- Background and context on district elementary facilities
- Community input activity and questions
- Next steps and closing

October 22, 2025 — Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and meeting purpose
- Review of committee role and process guardrails
- Framing the ideal elementary experience
- Small-group discussion and idea generation
- Identification of common themes and values
- Next steps and closing

November 18, 2025 — Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and review of prior work
- Reflections from attendance center and Fort Madison tours
- Review of current facility conditions
- Identification of strengths and gaps
- Group discussion and synthesis
- Preview of upcoming scenario work

December 18, 2025 — Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and framing of the session purpose
- Reflections from the Central Campus tour
- Review and confirmation of the North Star
- Scenario generation activity
- Scenario clustering and clarification
- Individual voting to identify scenarios for deeper analysis
- Scenario analysis (strengths, concerns, tradeoffs)
- Whole-group synthesis and Board-readiness check
- Closing and next steps

Appendix E. Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Ideation Summary

Ideas (<i>Italicized text is the group consensus title for the scenario</i>)	Votes
<i>PK-5 Central Campus Plus Daycare</i> PK-5 at Central Campus PK-5 at Central Campus, including day care PK-5 at Central Campus, including day care	30
<i>Close Three Buildings (Harlen, Lincoln, Salem)</i> <i>Operate out of 2 Elementary buildings (Van Allen and Central Campus)</i> Remodel Van Allen PreK-2, Central Campus 3-5th Close remaining elementaries Mt Pleasant opens new 2-5 facility at Central Campus with PreK-1 in updated Van Allen Early Childhood (daycare, PS, K) at Van Allen Central Campus 1st-5th Close 2-3 buildings and operate out of 2 elementary buildings Close Link, Harlan, Salem, and operate a centralized experience Prek-5th	30
<i>Close All Elementaries and move to Middle School</i> <i>Build a New Middle School on the High School Campus</i> Current HS + auditorium + MS Central campus + Middle school building remain Elementary - close Harlan, Lincoln, Salem, Van Allen Buildn new middle school at the high school campus Central elementary school at the current middle school Keep Van Allen	16
<i>Keep All Elementary Schools as Neighborhood Schools with Appropriate Remodeling</i> Leave all buildings open Remodel to go back to neighborhood schools Remodel existing schools Remodel Van Allen to fit more kids Remodel Salem and Harlan for Prek-5th grades	14
Central Campus becomes the middle school Van Allen is remodeled for daycare and PreK through 2nd grade The current middle school becomes upper elementary with 3rd-5th grades	6
Salem closes Existing schools operate as grade-alike buildings	2
Move elementary to the central campus, 2nd-6th grades Remodel Van Allen to accommodate PreK-1st grades, day care, and afterschool programming Remodel high school to accommodate 7th-12 grades with an auditorium Close Harlan, Lincoln, Salem, and middle school	2
Remodel the central campus for high school and put the elementary at the current high school	2
Operate out of 2 elemnetaries in town Keep Salem open	2

Appendix F. Scenario Analysis Worksheet Template

Appendix G.1. Scenario A: PK–5 Central Campus with Daycare

Under this scenario, all elementary students would be consolidated into a single PK–5 Central Campus, with the inclusion of early childhood and daycare services. This approach emphasizes unified programming, shared resources, and long-term flexibility.

What Works Well in This Scenario

- Creates a unified elementary experience for all students
- Improves access to dedicated instructional, support, and specialized spaces
- Supports strong collaboration among staff and consistent programming
- Allows for integrated early childhood and daycare services
- Enhances operational efficiency through centralized resources
- Offers flexibility for future program growth and adaptation

What Doesn't Work / Raises Concerns

- Represents a significant departure from current attendance center models
- Concentrates all elementary students at a single site
- Raises concerns about scale, supervision, and student movement
- Increases transportation demands for many families
- Requires substantial transition planning and change management
- May reduce neighborhood-based community connection to schools

Key Tensions or Tradeoffs the Board Should Understand

- Consistency and efficiency versus neighborhood presence
- Centralized resources versus scale and complexity
- Program integration versus logistical demands
- Long-term flexibility versus short-term disruption
- System-wide equity versus geographic accessibility

Questions Raised by the Committee for the Board

- How large is too large for a single elementary campus serving PK–5 students?
- How would safety, supervision, and student movement be managed at scale?
- What role should integrated daycare and early childhood services play in district facilities planning?
- How might this model affect families' sense of connection to their neighborhood schools?
- Is the community prepared for the level of change required to move to a single-campus model?

Appendix G.2. Scenario B: Close Three Elementary Buildings and Operate Two Elementary Schools

Under this scenario, the district would close three elementary buildings (Salem, Harlan, and Lincoln) and operate two elementary schools. Students would be consolidated into fewer facilities, likely organized by grade bands, to improve equity, efficiency, and use of space.

What Works Well in This Scenario

- Creates greater consistency in student experience across elementary schools
- Improves access to dedicated instructional and support spaces
- Increases opportunities for teacher collaboration and team cohesion
- Reduces duplication of staffing and programming across buildings
- Improves operational efficiency and daily logistics
- Allows remaining buildings to be used more fully and intentionally

What Doesn't Work / Raises Concerns

- Results in the closure of multiple neighborhood schools
- Increases transportation time and complexity for some students and families
- Raises concerns about loss of community identity tied to school buildings
- Requires significant transition planning for students, staff, and families
- Does not utilize the Central Campus as an instructional site
- May face resistance from communities most affected by closures

Key Tensions or Tradeoffs the Board Should Understand

- Equity and efficiency versus neighborhood presence and tradition
- Fewer, better-resourced schools versus broader geographic access
- Operational simplicity versus community disruption
- System-wide consistency versus localized identity
- Short-term transition challenges versus long-term sustainability

Questions Raised by the Committee for the Board

- How should the district balance equity of student experience with the value of neighborhood schools?
- What level of community disruption is acceptable in pursuit of operational efficiency and consistency?
- How will the district support students, families, and staff through school closures and transitions?
- Does this scenario go far enough to address long-term facility and staffing challenges?
- How should the Central Campus factor into long-term planning if it is not used in this scenario?

Appendix G.3 Scenario C: Close All Elementary Schools and Reconfigure the Middle School

Under this scenario, all existing elementary schools would be closed, and the middle school would be reconfigured to serve elementary grades. Elementary programming would be consolidated into a single, repurposed facility.

What Works Well in This Scenario

- Consolidates elementary students into one facility
- Reduces the number of buildings requiring maintenance and staffing
- Allows for reimagining space use within an existing structure
- May improve operational efficiency through consolidation
- Creates consistency in student experience across grades
- Eliminates duplication of services and programming

What Doesn't Work / Raises Concerns

- Represents a highly transformational change to current school configurations
- Requires a significant redesign of a facility not originally built for young students
- Raises concerns about the developmental appropriateness of space
- Concentrates all elementary students in a single building
- Alters established grade-level pathways and transitions
- May reduce community connection to neighborhood schools

Key Tensions or Tradeoffs the Board Should Understand

- Facility reuse versus developmental fit
- Operational efficiency versus student-centered design
- Consolidation versus community presence
- System-wide consistency versus age-appropriate environments
- Cost containment versus educational suitability

Questions Raised by the Committee for the Board

- Is the middle school facility appropriate for long-term use by elementary-aged students?
- What redesign would be required to support safety, supervision, and developmentally appropriate spaces?
- How would this reconfiguration affect middle school programming and identity?
- Does the operational efficiency of this scenario outweigh the educational and community tradeoffs?
- Is this approach aligned with the district's long-term vision for elementary education?

Appendix G.4. Scenario D: Maintain All Elementary Schools with Incremental Improvements

Under this scenario, the district would continue operating all existing elementary schools as neighborhood schools. Identified facility needs would be addressed through phased, incremental remodeling rather than consolidation or reconfiguration.

What Works Well in This Scenario

- Preserves neighborhood schools and long-standing community identity
- Maintains strong family connections and relationships within schools
- Minimizes disruption for students, families, and staff
- Allows siblings to attend school together and supports walkability in neighborhoods
- Enables phased improvements rather than a single large project
- Avoids leaving vacant school buildings across the community

What Doesn't Work / Raises Concerns

- Does not address underlying facility limitations related to safety, equity, and flexibility
- Requires continued investment across multiple aging and landlocked buildings
- Limits opportunities for consistent student experience across schools
- Creates ongoing staffing challenges due to shared staff and travel time
- Restricts teacher collaboration and team cohesion
- Raises concerns about long-term financial feasibility and sustainability

Key Tensions or Tradeoffs the Board Should Understand

- Stability and familiarity versus long-term equity and modernization
- Community comfort and nostalgia versus forward-looking planning
- Distributed investment across many buildings versus strategic, systemic improvement
- Maintaining neighborhood schools versus addressing staffing, safety, and space
- Short-term ease of implementation versus long-term sustainability

Questions Raised by the Committee for the Board

- How feasible is it to remodel and maintain all elementary buildings over time?
- How would the district prioritize improvements, and which students or schools would benefit first?
- Can incremental remodeling meaningfully address safety, equity, and flexibility concerns, or does it defer larger decisions?
- What benefits does this scenario offer students, staff, and families over other options?
- Is it realistic to expect this approach to support long-term staffing stability and collaboration?
- At what point does continued investment in existing buildings approach the cost of more transformative solutions?

Appendix H. Scenario Comparison

<i>Decision Lens</i>	<i>Scenario A PK-5 Central Campus + Daycare</i>	<i>Scenario B Close Three, Operate Two</i>	<i>Scenario C Reconfigure Middle School</i>	<i>Scenario D Maintain All Elementary Schools</i>
<i>Student Experience</i>	Unified experience for all PK-5 students	More consistent across students	Consistent, but dependent on redesign	Varies by building; familiar environments
<i>Equity Across the District</i>	High consistency and equity	Improved equity across remaining schools	High consistency, with fit concerns	Differences persist between schools
<i>Facilities & Space</i>	Purpose-built or adaptable centralized space	Better use of fewer buildings	Repurposed space not designed for elementary	Incremental improvements within existing limits
<i>Safety & Security</i>	Centralized design allows comprehensive approach	Improved through consolidation	Dependent on extent of reconfiguration	Improvements possible, structural limits remain
<i>Staffing & Collaboration</i>	Strong collaboration through centralization	Improved collaboration and efficiency	Centralized, but with grade-level complexity	Ongoing challenges across multiple sites
<i>Operations & Logistics</i>	Highly centralized operations	Simplified operations	Centralized, but with transition impacts	Complex, distributed operations
<i>Community Identity</i>	Shift toward system-wide identity	Mixed: loss of some neighborhood schools	Significant shift away from neighborhood model	Strong neighborhood identity
<i>Transportation Impacts</i>	Increased for many families	Increased for some families	Increased for most families	Minimal change
<i>Flexibility for the Future</i>	High flexibility for growth and adaptation	Moderate flexibility	Limited by original building design	Limited by existing buildings
<i>Scale of Change Required</i>	High	Moderate	Very high	Low
<i>Primary Tradeoff</i>	Flexibility vs. scale and disruption	Equity vs. neighborhood presence	Efficiency vs. developmental fit	Stability vs. long-term sustainability



Thank You!



Please contact us with any
inquiries or questions.

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