

Taxpayers of the Cornell School District, we want to know your thoughts about the future of our MS/HS. Please contact whoever you are comfortable with: Mr. Braaten [cbraaten@cornell.k12.wi.us](mailto:cbraaten@cornell.k12.wi.us), Mr. Thompson [tthompson@cornell.k12.wi.us](mailto:tthompson@cornell.k12.wi.us), Mrs. Koenig [kkoenig@cornell.k12.wi.us](mailto:kkoenig@cornell.k12.wi.us), myself [pmschley@cornell.k12.wi.us](mailto:pmschley@cornell.k12.wi.us) or any of the school board members.

We have an old MS/HS building, but due to our low property values in the district, we are unable to request a large enough referendum to build a whole new building. Per state statute, school districts can't have debt of more than 10% of their equalized value, which means we can currently only have a little more than \$28M in debt, which is not enough to purchase land and build a whole new facility. We haven't had any debt since we made additional principal payments in 2016 and the last time the district held a referendum was 2001.

There are some options. We could look to "whole grade share" with other districts and then close the current facility. We could stick a lot of money into remodeling, but we would still have an old building that is much larger than we need. We could build a new three story structure on the East side of the gym about ½ of the size of our current classrooms, keep the current gym, commons and metals shop, demolish the rest and build a new woods shop and tech ed. classroom connected to the current metals shop. This would also allow space for a long-term solution of building elementary rooms west of the MS/HS gym a few decades from now.

While we are a few years away from having to do anything, we want to go slow, listen to a lot of ideas, and think through this major decision carefully. We are open to anything and are gathering ideas, no matter if that is from doing nothing until the facility is condemned to building a state of the art facility. While I personally would like to see a new, basic, plain looking, high efficiency building built as small as possible; frankly, it is not my decision, but the decision of you, the public that has to weigh the costs associated with school buildings vs the value they provide and what you are willing to spend to make that happen. We look forward to your thoughts and have a Merry Christmas!