

MERCER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #404  
ALEDO, ILLINOIS  
Bray Project No. 3495



Wednesday, March,17 2021

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL PROJECT

The District has looked at various potential solutions to the long term educational and operational goals of the District.

Currently under consideration is the possibility of moving students out of the current Mercer County Junior High School Building in Joy, IL. This will require certain considerations be made, that benefits, and drawbacks will exist with respect to changes which will occur.

- The current Junior High building has several items of concern, including Health Life Safety deficiencies, necessary roof replacement, exterior wall repair, ADA compliance, window and door repair and replacement, and concerns with educational suitability of the building spaces.
- The District operates 5 buildings: 2 Elementary, 1 Intermediate, 1 Junior High, 1 High School.
  - Any reduction in the total number of buildings in operation will create a net savings to the district with respect to operating expense, staffing, bussing, etc.
  - Curriculum Alignment- The current arrangement of buildings and grade separation does not align with curriculum. Changes to location of attendance centers by grade level will better align with delivery of curriculum.
- A proposed plan is to relocate current Junior High students to the Intermediate School. A building addition will allow this building to function as a 6 – 8 Middle School building. Fifth Grade students will attend Elementary School at the existing Apollo and New Boston Elementary School buildings.
  - Creating a grade 6-8 facility in Aledo is easily accomplished by the addition of approximately 4 classrooms and related support spaces.
  - Expansion of the Mercer County Intermediate School does not preclude the implementation of any of the proposed solutions to enhancing the curriculum or student's educational experience.
  - Work to expand the current Intermediate School building could be completed while school is in session with minimal to no disruption.
  - A project to expand the current Intermediate School building can be feasibly accomplished within 8-12 months.
  - An expansion project can be completed for an estimated cost of \$2.2M, and utilized funds which do not impact tax rates for constituents.
- Through the study process it was determined that portions of the existing Junior High building could be retained and reused, however poor conditions of the remainder of building cause concerns for safety and well-being of students and staff.

- The study process which was completed indicated long range solutions for improvement and enhancement of the Mercer County School District. The implementation of a Middle School solution at the current Intermediate School is the first step towards a long-range plan which includes:
  - A possible combined elementary school on the centrally located Joy, IL campus
  - A possible new middle school on the centrally located Joy site, in combination with a move to attendance centers
  - Maintaining the current elementary schools with significant updates
  - Significant updates at the high school