



# FERGUS FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*"Committed To Excellence"*

## New Elementary School Proposal FAQ

**Q: Why is the district asking the community to consider a new school?**

A: The district was engaged in a strategic planning process that created a vision for education in the Fergus Falls Public School District.

The final stages of our strategic planning process involved analyzing the district's facilities to ensure that they supported our educational vision.

In all, the Facilities Committee spent approximately two years assessing the district's buildings. This included commissioning an independent facility analysis which was conducted by ATS&R.

Ultimately, the Facilities Committee recommended repurposing McKinley and Adams and building a new elementary school.

The following graphic illustrates the knowledge, skills, abilities and personal traits that is our vision for Otter graduates.

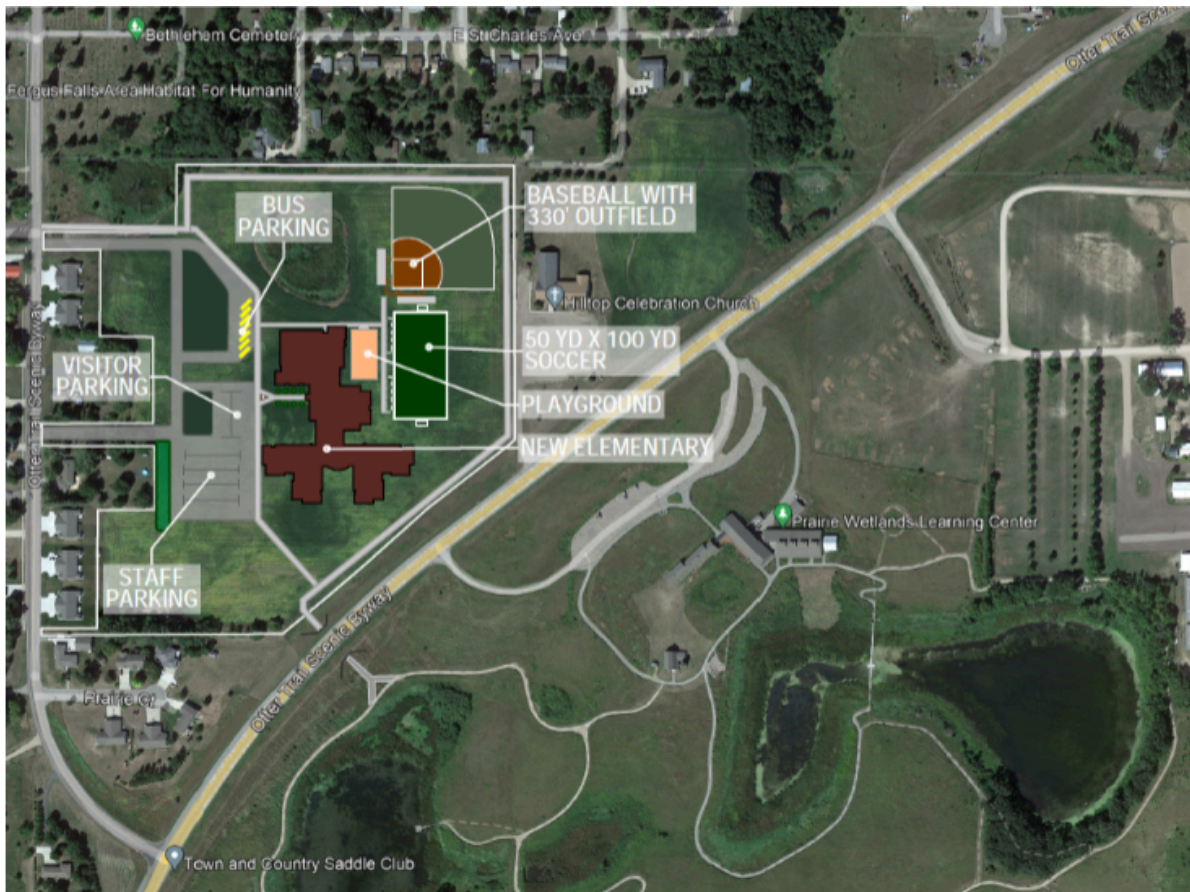


**Q: What grades would the new school serve?**

A: The new school would house grades 3 - 5.

**Q: Where would the new school be located?**

A: The district purchased nearly 29 acres along highway #210 across from the Prairie Wetlands Nature Center and next to Hilltop Celebration Church.



**Q: Why was this location selected?**

A: The location was deemed ideal for a third through fifth grade elementary school for several reasons.

First, its proximity to the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center greatly supports the award-winning Prairie Science Classroom experience available to our students in grades four and five. The location of a new 3rd through 5th grade elementary school would enhance this program by affording greater accessibility to the Prairie while reducing transportation time.

A new facility would also allow us to adequately address music space for our upper elementary students. Something we are sorely lacking currently.

The district also lacks green space. We have needs for additional practice and game facilities – especially for middle school sports.

The site was within city limits and has access to city utilities.

**Q: How large would the new school be?**

A: The building is projected to be approximately 110,000 square feet. For comparison, Lincoln School (former Target Building) is approximately 89,000 square feet.

**Q: What features would the new school offer?**

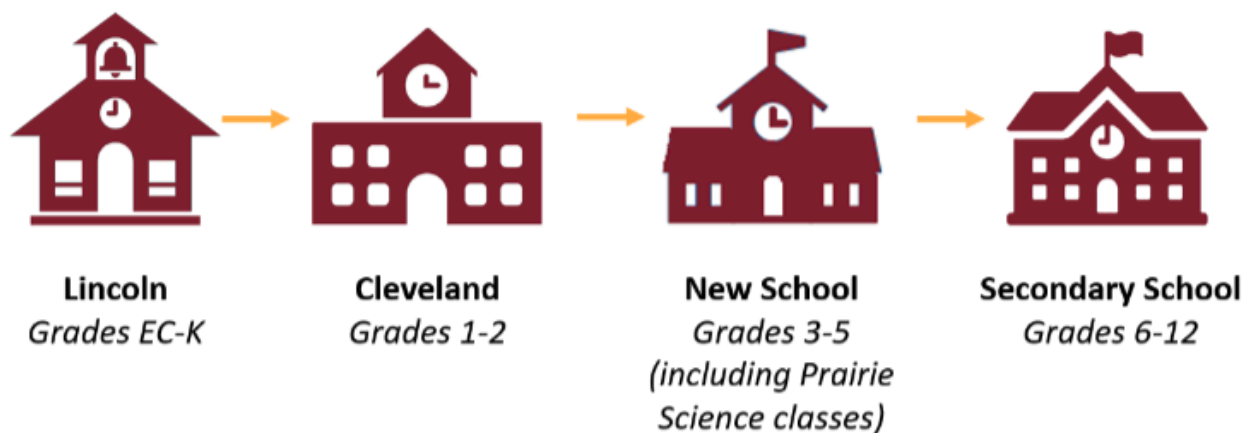
A: The following amenities would be key design features:

- ✓ Up-to-date safety and security systems.
- ✓ Areas designed for environmental science, biology, and Prairie Science classes.
- ✓ Additional greenspace.
- ✓ Spaces for student collaboration, STEM instruction, and project-based learning.
- ✓ Adequate parking and proper separation of pedestrians and vehicle/bus traffic.
- ✓ Music education areas (orchestra/band/choir).
- ✓ Dedicated gym and student commons areas.
- ✓ Outdoor athletic fields for middle school students.
- ✓ Natural daylight and energy-efficient building systems.
- ✓ Room for growth, if needed.

**Q: How would a new 3rd - 5th elementary school impact grade configurations throughout the school district?**

A: Please see the graphic below:

If the community supports this plan, schools/grades would be configured as follows:



**Q: How much would the new school cost?**

A: It is estimated to cost \$49.9 million.

**Q: What would the tax impact be?**

A: The following table illustrates the tax impact of a new school across multiple property classifications and valuations:



## Funding Support

The cost of the recommended plan is \$49.9 million. To pay for the plan, Fergus Falls area voters would need to approve a bond referendum, which allows the District to issue debt (take out a loan).

<b>Bond Amount</b>		\$49,900,000	
<b>Average Interest Rate</b>		5.00%	
<b>Number of Years (Tax Levies)</b>		20	
Type of Property	Estimated Market Value	Estimated Tax Increase in 2025 Compared to 2024	
		<i>Annual</i>	<i>Monthly</i>
<b>Residential Homestead</b>	\$100,000	\$36	\$3.00
	\$200,000	\$117	\$9.75
	\$300,000	\$198	\$16.50
	\$400,000	\$280	\$23.33
	\$500,000	\$370	\$30.83
<b>Commercial/Industrial</b>	\$100,000	\$112	\$9.33
	\$250,000	\$317	\$26.42
	\$500,000	\$689	\$57.42
<b>Ag Homestead</b> <i>(average value per acre of land and buildings)</i>	\$3,000	\$0.34	\$0.03
	\$4,000	\$0.45	\$0.04
	\$5,000	\$0.56	\$0.05
	\$6,000	\$0.67	\$0.06
<b>Ag Non-Homestead</b> <i>(average value per acre of land and buildings)</i>	\$3,000	\$0.67	\$0.06
	\$4,000	\$0.89	\$0.07
	\$5,000	\$1.12	\$0.09
	\$6,000	\$1.34	\$0.11
<b>Seasonal Recreational Residential</b>	\$100,000	\$75	\$6.25
	\$200,000	\$149	\$12.42
	\$300,000	\$224	\$18.67
	\$400,000	\$298	\$24.83
	\$500,000	\$373	\$31.08

**Q: What were the results of the ATS&R Facilities Study?**

### MCKINLEY ELEMENTARY

#### Facilities Assessment Summary by Category

##### Site

- Replace sections of concrete pavement areas that are broken, pitted, and/or are a trip hazard.
  - Including the removal and replacement of metal railings where present/necessary
- Remove and replace concrete steps, concrete wing walls, and metal railings.

- Steps do not have equal and proportional risers, or a trip hazard exist
- Clean and caulk expansion joint pavement cracks; both structural and/or parallel to building.
- Remove and replace sections of asphalt pavement areas to improve drainage.
- Clean and fill asphalt pavement cracks and seal coat asphalt pavement areas.
- Remove, replace, or mend chain link fence sections.
- Correct drainage and low areas around the building to provide proper drainage away from the building.
- Including planting bed and turf restoration.
- NOTE: A playground specialist should evaluate the rubber playground tiles and playground equipment to verify that they are still compliant.

### **General Building Condition – Exterior and Interior**

- Roofs out of warranty and beyond life expectancy
- Exterior- masonry restoration, canopies, corrosion at lintels and doors- require upgrades
- Interior- doors, VAT replacement, carpet, roof access and restroom accessibility- require upgrades

### **Food Service**

- Revise kitchen to comply with hybrid central kitchen district model
- Serving line to be replaced for adequate serving
- Replace non-compliant equipment including wood cabinetry
- Refer to spreadsheet for detailed equipment list

### **Mechanical**

In 2014 McKinley Elementary School had HVAC upgrades throughout the building. These upgrades include a central geothermal system that provides heating and cooling to the building. The plant consists of modular water-cooled chillers and 3 sets of pumps to circulate water through the well, cooling, and heating loops.

A rooftop energy recovery unit provides ventilation to the fan coil units. There are a total of 29 fan coil units and 2 air handling units which distribute supply air and provide temperature control. The building energy management system is direct digital control. The following are recommendations incorporated in the report:

- Replace all Gruvlok fittings
- Provide backup hot water boiler
- Replace old exhaust fans
- Replace domestic hot water heaters

### **Electrical**

- Replace fluorescent lighting throughout the building with LED lighting with occupancy sensors for energy savings. Payback is approximately 3 years, not including rebates that may be offered by some utilities.
- Some electrical panels are original and need to be replaced.

## Technology

- Replace technology cabling, which is older and does not meet current installation standards.
  - It was installed before there were standards, so it is installed improperly (i.e. running over light fixtures, which can create interference, unsupported laying on ceiling tiles, etc.).

## McKinley Elementary Educational Adequacy Analysis

### Capacity

Note, for elementary schools, capacity is calculated as the number of grade level classrooms used, multiplied by the district's max student per section for those grade levels. Use of standard size classrooms for special ed reduces capacity.

McKinley has 11 grade level classrooms in 2021 x 22 students/section (Kindergarten max) = 242 student Capacity.

### Summary

Refer to Educational Adequacy graphics on the next two pages for detailed analysis.

- The site is very 'undersized', with no on-site parking, resulting in parent/student drop-off/pickup/ parking, staff parking, and bus drop-off/pick-up all occurring on the street. This lack of parking limits the size of school activities and has a negative impact on neighborhood traffic (though the building has been there so long that the neighbors are used to it).
- The limitation in the size of the site does not allow for expansion to accommodate 21st century educational needs.
- The kindergarten rooms are undersized per MDE square footage guidelines. Only the two 1st grade classrooms are an acceptable size per the guidelines.
- The school lacks appropriate space to accommodate current learning activities that are typically found in classrooms today. For example, the use of differentiated instruction and small group/collaborative learning do not have appropriately designed space.
- The school does not have sufficient space for needs such as pull-out student support services, professional development, or conferencing.
- Special education is utilizing two former office spaces as a classroom and repurposed resource room.

- The 'core' areas are not adequately sized. This includes library, gym, cafeteria, food service prep areas, art/science, and music.

## EDUCATIONAL ADEQUACY

### Safety & Security

- Secure Entry modifications
- Building Zoning (public spaces not together to zone)
- Restroom Safety (not supervisable – sinks interior)

### Core space sizes (SF)

- Classroom (Kind. too small per MDE, only 1<sup>st</sup> gr OK)
- Cafeteria / Kitchen
- Library
- Gyms/PE
- Science/Art/Music (no Art)
- Performance
- Special Ed (using one full CR)
- Staff (Admin / Nurse area too small)

### Educational Environment

- Variety of Spaces
  - Individual
  - One on One
  - Teaming
  - Classrooms presentation
  - Large group, grade level / all school
  - Variety of Furniture
- Agile and Flexible
  - Architecture – Spatial Connections
  - Furniture (Flexible/Ergonomic)
  - Daylighting/Connections to Nature
- Lighting (No daylighting at L1 cafeteria) (Minimal daylighting at L1 support spaces)
- Acoustics
- Indoor Air quality
- Technology Integration
- School & Community Pride/Ethos Messaging

## McKinley Elementary School

Capacity: 242

12 full std. CR-sized spaces

2021 Enrollment: ~238

~ 11 sections + special ed

(9) Kindergarten- 895- 1010 sf - undersized per MDE 1200-1500 sf., no attached bathroom

(2) Classrooms- 1st grade 890 sf - OK

Portion of (too small) gym partitioned off for Adaptive Phy-Ed and phy-ed storage



### First Floor

L1 - No connections between ends of building – no elev access to South L1 staff area

- Good
- Modifications Suggested
- Attention Item
- Below SF Standards

Gym 2 stations- 1/2 rec. MDE size - 4,785 sf total versus MDE 6-8,000. Some students also eat lunch here.

Kitchen & Dish room- limited function due to size, designed for a different time and food service delivery model.

Cafeteria #117 – bot. of range in size at 1200 as compared to MDE. In actual function, is too small – some kids eating in gym. MDE size according to number of lunches served and # of lunch periods generally 2-3 at 12-15 square feet per student. No natural light – poor environment

### Safety & Security-

- L 1 - Secure accessible entry on walkout side by elevator.
- L 2 - Locked vestibule, second set of doors prior to office, separate gym access for building zoning, addtl doors at addition.
- Physical plant, storage & staff accessed separately from front



### Second Floor

No Art/Science space

Library/ Media Center - 2 spaces, 860 +310 sf - undersized and lacking seating and support spaces such as small group, conference, office, study area

Performance in music room limited by site size (no parking), requires multiple sessions.

Admin/Nurse – 800 sf – very small – MDE 1840 min. Privacy issues between visitors/ admin functions and ill students / student discipline

Limited variety of spaces, most are classroom size - missing large group and small for regular student population as well as sufficient program support spaces – specials, pullouts, etc. spaces. Limits flexibility & teaching options. Double loaded corridor, "cells & bells", no flex space, capacity limited by number & size of rooms - examples: special ed in a full-size classroom or conversely Kindergarten in smaller regular Elementary sized classroom. Lack flexibility to team.

ATSR

## SITE ANALYSIS

### Educational Adequacy

- Site Size (2.25 Acres is very small, MDE is 13-18 acres for this enrollment)

### Location

- Easily Accessible, convenient location
- Removed from noise/traffic
- Space for Expansion (none)

### Allow for safe:

- Drop Off (on-street only – park and walk in)
- Pedestrian (these grade levels do not walk)
- Bike Traffic (these grade levels do not bike)
- Traffic Flow (all on-street parking/drop-off/ buses requires timing coordination for safety)

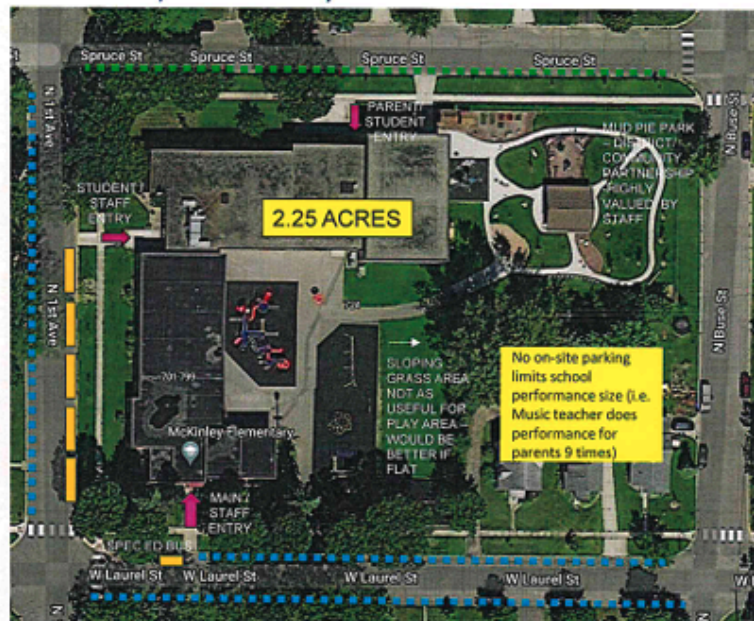
### Site Amenities:

- Adequate Parking (no parking)
- Bike Racks (N/A)
- Athletic Fields (limited fields for school/ community use)
- Outdoor classrooms (Mud Pie Park)
- Environmental learning (Mud Pie Park)

### Key

- Good
- Modifications Suggested
- Attention Item
- Staff Parking
- Drop Off / Pick Up /short-term parent parking
- Heavy Traffic
- School Bus
- Entry

## McKinley Elementary School



MDE Elementary School Site Requirement: 10 -15 acres + PLUS: one additional acre for each 100 students of estimated student enrollment and community use/partnership program capacity, including possible additions = 13 - 18 acres

City of Fergus Falls Zoning Code: Off-Street Parking Requirement: 2 parking spaces per classroom x 15 = 30 spaces min. (should also have spaces for other pull-out staff and admin.)

Actual = NONE

More adverse impact for neighbors and street traffic due to buses, drop-off/pick-up, and all parking being on streets.

ATSR



## **ADAMS ELEMENTARY**

### **Facilities Assessment Summary by Category**

#### **Site**

- Replace sections of concrete pavement areas that are broken, pitted, and/or are a trip hazard
  - Including the removal and replacement of metal railings where present/necessary
- Remove and replace sections of retaining wall block units that are deteriorated
- Remove and replace asphalt pavement (playground and parking lot) areas
- Remove, replace, or mend chain link fence sections
- Correct drainage and low areas around building to provide proper drainage away from building including planting bed and turf restoration
- NOTE: A playground specialist should evaluate the rubber playground tiles and playground equipment to verify that they are still compliant

#### **General Building Condition – Exterior and Interior**

- Roofs out of warranty and beyond life expectancy
- Exterior - masonry restoration, steel lintels at openings, painting and sealants- require upgrades
- Interior - doors, wire glass, carpet, water-stained adhered ceiling tile, roof access, restroom accessibility – require upgrades.

#### **Food Service**

- Revise kitchen to comply with hybrid central kitchen district model.
- Serving line to be replaced for adequate serving. Replace non compliant equipment including wood cabinetry. Refer to spreadsheet for detailed equipment list.

#### **Mechanical**

In 2017 Adams Elementary School had HVAC upgrades throughout the building. These upgrades include a central geothermal system that provides heating and cooling to the building. The plant consists of modular water-cooled chillers and 3 sets of pumps to circulate water through the well, cooling, and heating loops.

A rooftop energy recovery unit provides ventilation to the fan coil units. There are a total of 30 fan coil units and 2 air handling units which distribute supply air and provide temperature control. The building energy management system is direct digital control. A backup condensing hot water boiler was added in 2019.

The following are recommendation incorporated in the report:

- Replace old exhaust fans
- Replace domestic hot water heaters

## Electrical

- Replace fluorescent lighting throughout the building with LED lighting with occupancy sensors for energy savings. Payback is approximately 3 years, not including rebates that may be offered by some utilities.
- The main electrical service (switchboard) and some panels are original and need to be replaced.

## Technology

- Replace technology cabling, which is older and does not meet current installation standards.
  - It was installed before there were standards, so it is installed improperly (i.e. running over light fixtures, which can create interference, unsupported laying on ceiling tiles, etc.).

## Adams Elementary: Educational Adequacy Analysis

### Capacity

Note, for elementary schools, capacity is calculated as the number of grade level classrooms used, multiplied by the district's max student per section for those grade levels. Use of standard size classrooms for special ed reduces capacity.

Adams has 14 grade level classrooms in 2021 x 24 students/section (1st & 2nd grade max) = 336 student Capacity.

## Summary

- The site is very 'undersized', with little on-site parking, resulting in parent/student drop-off/pickup/ parking, staff parking, and bus drop-off/pick-up all occurring on the street. This lack of parking limits the size of school activities and has a negative impact on neighborhood traffic (though the building has been there so long that the neighbors are used to it).
- The limitation in the size of the site does not allow for expansion to accommodate 21st century educational needs.
- The standard classrooms are an acceptable size.
- The school lacks appropriate space to accommodate current learning activities that are typically found in classrooms today. For example, the use of differentiated instruction and small group/collaborative learning do not have appropriately designed space.
- The school does not have sufficient space for needs such as pull-out student support services, professional development, or conferencing.
- Special education seems adequate but utilizes standard classroom space, which may not be right sized, and makes those classrooms unavailable for standard usage.

- The 'core' areas are generally not adequately sized. This includes library, gym, food service prep areas, art/science, and music.

## EDUCATIONAL ADEQUACY

### Safety & Security

- Secure Entry modifications
- Building Zoning
- Restroom Safety (not supervisable – sinks interior)

### Core space sizes (SF)

- Classroom (OK – MDE 830-1030 sf)
- Cafeteria / Kitchen
- Library
- Gyms/PE
- Science/Art/Music (Music too small, no Art)
- Performance
- Special Ed (must use full CR, no smaller spaces avail)
- Staff (Admin / Nurse area too small)

### Educational Environment

- Variety of Spaces
  - Individual
  - One on One
  - Teaming
  - Classrooms presentation
  - Large group, grade level / all school
  - Variety of Furniture
- Agile and Flexible
  - Architecture – Spatial Connections
  - Furniture (Flexible/Ergonomic)
  - Daylighting/Connections to Nature
- Lighting (Minimal daylighting at L1 support spaces)
- Acoustics
- Indoor Air quality
- Technology Integration
- School & Community Pride/Ethos Messaging

## Adams Elementary School

Capacity: 336

16 full CR-sized spaces

2021 Enrollment: +302 - 14 sections + special ed

Cafeteria #202 (Original gym) - adequate size at 1580 as compared to MDE. Size according to number of lunches served and # of lunch periods - generally 2-3 at 12-15 square feet per student.

- Secure accessible entry
- Limited building zoning - gyms from rest of school.

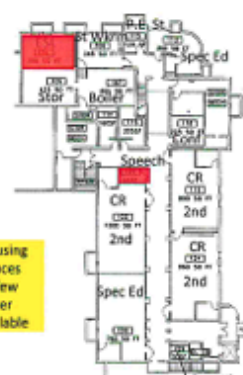
Kitchen & Dish room - limited function due to size, designed for a different time and food service delivery model.

Gym addition - very small at 2440 sf, MDE 6-8,000 sf. (also cafeteria is small when used as a gym)

Admin/Nurse - 800 sf - very small - MDE 1840 min. Privacy issues between visitors/admin functions and ill students / student discipline

Library/ Media Center - 1 room at 1070 sf - undersized and lacking seating and support spaces such as small group, conference, office, study area

Music - 1 room at 870 sf - inadequate, MDE 1,000-1,500 in multiple activity spaces.

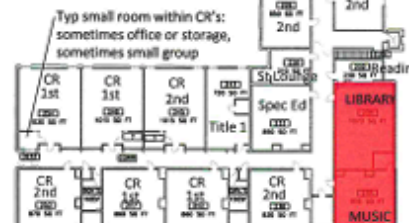


First Floor

Special Ed using full CR reduces capacity - few other smaller spaces available

Limited variety of spaces, most are classroom size - missing large group and small as well as sufficient program support spaces - specials, pullouts, etc. Double loaded corridor, "cells & bells", no flex space, lack flexibility to team.

- Key
- Good
  - Modifications Suggested
  - Attention Item
  - Below SF Standards



Second Floor

2 sets of restrooms this level with limited accessibility; particularly poor condition & inadequate at south addition. Remodeling recommended.

No Art/Science space

A T S R

## SITE ANALYSIS

### Educational Adequacy

- Site Size (2.58 Acres is very small, MDE is 13-18 acres for this enrollment)

### Location

- Easily Accessible, convenient location
- Removed from noise/traffic
- Space for Expansion (none)

### Allow for safe:

- Drop Off (limited length, on-street only)
- Pedestrian
- Bike Traffic (this grade level does not bike)
- Traffic Flow (lot access conflict with bus/drop-off requires limitations on access to parking lot)

### Site Amenities:

- Adequate Parking (Limited off-street staff/visitor/parent parking)
- Bike Racks (N/A)
- Athletic Fields (limited fields for school/community use)
- Outdoor classrooms
- Environmental learning

### Key

- Good
- Modifications Suggested
- Attention Item
- Staff / Parent Parking
- Drop Off / Pick Up
- Heavy Traffic
- School Bus
- Entry

## Adams Elementary School



MDE Elementary School Site Requirement: 10 - 15 acres + PLUS: one additional acre for each 100 students of estimated student enrollment and community use/partnership program capacity, including possible additions = 13 - 18 acres

City of Fergus Falls Zoning Code: Off-Street Parking Requirement: 2 parking spaces per classroom x 18 = 36 spaces min. (should also have spaces for other pull-out staff and admin.) Actual = 15 spaces

More adverse impact for neighbors and street traffic due to buses, drop-off/pick-up, and almost all parking being on streets.

A T S R

Q: What would happen to McKinley and Adams?

A: The district would look to sell these buildings so that they could be repurposed to meet a community need. Options could include: child care center, apartments/assisted living, Boys/Girls Club, etc.

**Q: When was the last new school constructed in the district?**

A: The last completely new school built in the Fergus Falls School District was the middle school which dates back to 1969.

**Q: When would the community potentially vote on a school bond?**

A: If the survey results indicate that there is interest and support for this plan, the district would present the community with a bond vote in April or May of 2024.

**Q. If the community were to approve a bond for a new elementary school, what would the timeframe be for its construction?**

A: This is a little difficult to project. The district would not begin working with an architect to design the new school until a bond referendum was successfully passed. The design process would involve feedback from school staff and the community. It is likely that the new school would not be available for occupancy for at least two years.