

# Tri-Township Consolidated School Corporation

M. Kelly Shepherd  
Superintendent

LaCrosse and Wanatah Schools

PO Box 249  
Wanatah, IN 46390  
219-754-2709, Fax 219-754-2793

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are we building a new gym? Answer: No, the Tiger Den is still the home facility for high school athletics. It will still be utilized occasionally for middle school athletics as it always has. Lastly, it is still where we will conduct our graduation and other events.
2. What is going to happen to the LaCrosse High School Building?  
Answer: We do not have the answer to that phase yet. Our first priority is to make the best educational decisions for our current students and future high school students to come.
3. Is this just a financial decision? Answer: No. Of course, the finance and budget side play a huge role, but that is one portion of the decision. The other major factors are enrollment, programming, and safety.
4. Why is enrollment such an important factor? Answer: The fund (Education Fund) that pays for people (the most important part of the system) to educate our students gets dollars from the State Basic Grant. Those dollars to pay for those people are based on our number of students.
5. Wouldn't it be cheaper to renovate the building we already have?  
Answer: No, due to the scope of work it would require to meet today's educational building code requirements, the cost for renovation far exceeds the cost to add on a high school wing at Wanatah. Further, those renovation costs would create no new space and we would still be limited with programming and enrollment issues. The actual difference in hard numbers provided is around 3 million dollars. A LaCrosse renovation is estimated at over 6 million dollars and a high school wing addition at Wanatah is estimated at just under 3 million.
6. Why hasn't money been put into the LaCrosse building? Answer: Money has been put into the LaCrosse building. In 2010, a half million dollar project included the following in the school building:  
-ADA Parking Spaces

- East Entrance Doors
- ADA Bathroom Facility
- Storage Room
- Masonry Restoration
- South Exterior Stairway
- Enclosed Walkway

Between 2011 and 2020, in the school-house approximately \$47,500 dollars was spent on HVAC upgrades and repairs. A basement remodel of the transportation and guidance offices cost \$16,870 dollars in 2017. An additional \$40,000 was spent on doors and stairs in 2011. Over \$22,000 dollars was spent on parking and landscaping from 2013 through 2018. Just a year ago we laid some carpet squares down over old hardwood floors to mitigate the noise traveling between floors. Some upgrades have just gotten to a point of being cost prohibitive when compared with the overall age of the building. We have an extremely old large scale forced air furnace. If it breaks, the estimate to replace is \$250,000 dollars. However, that isn't exactly accurate as a boiler system would be required to meet today's Sanitary School House air requirements. That would require running water piping throughout the building and includes a cost estimate over half a million dollars.

7. Why isn't there a public comment portion for the two public meetings at the High School? Answer: These two meetings are focused on getting factual information into the hands of our public. Because large group dialogue is a historically bad mechanism for having productive discourse, we are choosing a much more conducive approach. I have experienced scenarios in the past where a few more vocal participants steal away the opportunity for others to get accurate information. This frequently asked questions document will be continually updated over the coming days and weeks. Furthermore, I will make myself available at a time and place of your choosing to have productive individual meetings. If you request this of me, I will be happy to oblige. I will also answer any emails or phone calls you send my way. I want each and every community member to have the opportunity to be heard and have questions answered.
8. Is the cost of tearing down LaCrosse included in the Wanatah estimate? Answer: No, and it has not been discussed. Since there have been no discussions about what to do with our current school house in LaCrosse, we have not asked Performance Services to provide that type of information.
9. What is the square feet measurement of the existing high school vs. the size of an addition at Wanatah? Answer: 22,000 total feet at LaCrosse vs. 6,000 sq. feet of new addition at Wanatah. There is space available for use at Wanatah that contributes to the difference. In addition, there are already shared staff who occupy space at Wanatah.

10. Is the area identified for moving the road to on the proposed Wanatah plan school owned? Answer: yes
11. Why not consider the other end of the school at Wanatah for the addition? Answer: Performance is still in the process of considering many possibilities and what has been presented is just one initial idea. They chose this possibility first due to the obvious separation of Jr. /Sr. H.S. from elementary and it being most economical at first glance.
12. Is the cafeteria at Wanatah big enough? Answer: Yes
13. Is the kitchen at Wanatah big enough? Answer: While Performance has not formally evaluated that based on space, they believe equipment upgrades in the kitchen are soon due.
14. What happens if we get more students (room to grow)? Answer: There is flex space showing on the current drawings and in addition, if central office needs to move to make additional classroom space, they are prepared to find other space. The students and teachers are the first priority when considering potential plans.
15. Are they busing kids to LaCrosse gym for practice? Answer: Yes, there are logistics that will need to be worked out and will be worked out. That fact has always been the case with our district and will continue. We are well versed at problem solving for the benefit of our students and staff.
16. Is parking area at Wanatah going to be expanded? Answer: We have 14 additional spaces showing on the current drawings to account for student drivers.
17. How long has Performance Services been working on the assessment? Answer: The facility study started back in 2015 and I recently asked them for updates.
18. Why has the cost increased from 3.6 million to 6.5 million at LaCrosse? Answer: There has been significant cost of construction inflation in 5 years and the updates now include more systems and greater scope than the broader study conducted in 2015.