



**BUILDING A
STRONGER
FUTURE FOR
VIGO COUNTY:**

**INDEPENDENT
OVERSIGHT BOARD
RECOMMENDATION**

*A responsible path forward that strengthens
our schools, protects taxpayers, and invests in
Vigo County's future.*



WHY WE WERE CREATED

The Vigo County Oversight Board was established to provide an **independent review** of both the Vigo County School Corporation's long-term facilities plan and the County's financial ability to participate in that plan. Our responsibility was simple:



Determine whether there is a financially responsible solution that serves both Vigo County students and Vigo County taxpayers.

This Board represents taxpayers—not the school corporation—and conducted its work through public meetings, financial analysis, and independent review.

OUR PROCESS

Over the past several months, the Oversight Board:

- Reviewed the School Corporation's facilities studies and financial plans
- Evaluated multiple facility scenarios
- Examined long-term County finances
- Consulted financial professionals
- Considered future community needs
- Listened to business leaders and community stakeholders
- Conducted all meetings in compliance with Indiana's Open Door Law

THIS RECOMMENDATION IS THE RESULT OF MONTHS OF INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS—NOT A PREDETERMINED OUTCOME.



WHAT TAXPAYERS TOLD US

Throughout this process, several themes consistently emerged.

Taxpayers want:



**Responsible
Spending**



**No Property
Tax Increase**



**Better
Accountability**



**Better Educational
Opportunities**



**A Solution – Not
Another Referendum**



**THE OVERSIGHT BOARD USED THESE PRIORITIES TO GUIDE TODAY'S
RECOMMENDATION.**

WHAT WE FOUND

The facts are clear.

- Student enrollment continues to decline. (In the last 20 years, we've lost nearly 4,000 students.)
- School facilities continue to age.
- Maintaining 23 aging facilities is increasingly expensive.
- Current funding sources are not keeping pace with long-term facility needs.
- Delaying decisions only increases future costs.

**THE STATUS QUO IS NO LONGER
FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE.**



WE EVALUATED EVERY OPTION.

The Oversight Board carefully reviewed every major facilities option considered by the School Corporation.

Each was evaluated using common criteria:

- Long-term taxpayer cost
- Educational outcomes
- Student opportunities
- Building quality
- Transportation
- Operational efficiency
- Long-term maintenance

Our goal was not simply to build something new. Our goal was to identify the option that delivers the **greatest long-term value for Vigo County taxpayers.**



ENROLLMENT HAS CHANGED.

We are building for tomorrow's enrollment—not yesterday's.

RESEARCH ACROSS INDIANA SHOWS:

Many school corporations are facing long-term enrollment declines driven by demographic changes, leading communities to reexamine facility footprints rather than continue maintaining underutilized buildings.



THEN VS NOW

Is one East Side High School a "Mega School"?

No. In fact, its enrollment will be comparable to Terre Haute North in 1972.



1972

**NORTH HIGH SCHOOL
ALONE**

725 GRADUATES

2030

**NORTH AND SOUTH HIGH SCHOOLS
COMBINED (FORECASTED)**

600 GRADUATES

THE STUDENTS ALREADY EXIST.

The proposal does not create thousands of new students. It brings existing East Side students together in one modern facility while preserving West Vigo High School.

ALL OPTIONS

	OPTION 2	OPTION 4	OPTION 6	OPTION 7	OPTION 1	OPTION 5	OPTION 3
	One HS for the entire County utilizing the current North HS (1 HS, 4 MS, 10 ES)	Two HS with continued use of WV and with North HS serving as the HS east of the river (2 HS, 4 MS, 10 ES)	One Jr/Sr High with continued use of WV and a newly constructed HS located east of the river (2 HS, 4 MS, 10 ES)	Two HS with one located at the current North HS and other located at the current South HS (2 HS, 5 MS, 12 ES)	One newly constructed HS for the entire County (1 HS, 4 MS, 10 ES)	Two HS with continued use of WV and with South HS serving as the HS east of the river (2 HS, 5 MS, 12 ES)	Continue with 3 HS, 5 MS, and 15 ES (modernizing the status quo) (3 HS, 5 MS, 15 ES)
Annual Estimate Education Fund Savings compared to Option 3 (Status Quo) [Based on 2026 Cost Estimates]	\$11,400,000	\$9,500,000	\$10,300,000	\$4,100,000	\$12,100,000	\$6,800,000	\$0
Annual Estimated Operations Fund Savings compared to Option 3 (Status Quo) [Based on 2026 Cost Estimates]	\$6,200,000*	\$5,000,000*	\$3,500,000	\$1,600,000*	\$4,700,000	3,000,000*	\$0
Estimated Savings for Modernization Costs for ES, MS, and HS compared to Option 3 (Status Quo) [Based on 2027 Cost Estimates]	\$136,700,000*	\$96,700,000*	\$61,600,000	\$70,300,000*	\$81,700,000	\$33,700,000*	\$0
Estimated Savings for Modernization Costs for ES, MS, and HS compared to Option 3 (Status Quo) with the alternate West Side [Based on 2027 Cost Estimates]	\$136,700,000*	\$121,700,000 - \$136,700,000*	\$86,600,000 - \$101,600,000	\$70,300,000*	\$81,700,000	\$58,700,000 – 73,700,000*	\$0

* Indicates options with operational or modernization savings tied to assumptions.

A CLOSER LOOK AT OPTION 6

Annual Estimate Education Fund Savings compared to Option 3 (Status Quo) [Based on 2026 Cost Estimates]
Annual Estimated Operations Fund Savings compared to Option 3 (Status Quo) [Based on 2026 Cost Estimates]
Estimated Savings for Modernization Costs for ES, MS, and HS compared to Option 3 (Status Quo) [Based on 2027 Cost Estimates]
Estimated Savings for Modernization Costs for ES, MS, and HS compared to Option 3 (Status Quo) with the alternate West Side [Based on 2027 Cost Estimates]

OPTION 6
One Jr/Sr High with continued use of WV and a newly constructed HS located east of the river (2 HS, 4 MS, 10 ES)
\$10,300,000
\$3,500,000
\$61,600,000
\$86,600,000 - \$101,600,000



Through its independent review, the Oversight Board recommended a change to achieve additional savings.

* Indicates options with operational or modernization savings tied to assumptions.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

After extensive review, the Oversight Board believes the strongest long-term solution is:

BUILD A NEW EAST SIDE HIGH SCHOOL

&

FULLY RENOVATE WEST VIGO HIGH SCHOOL

This recommendation:

- Preserves West Vigo
- Modernizes educational opportunities
- Reduces long-term operating costs
- Creates a sustainable footprint
- Better positions Vigo County for future growth



WHY THIS OPTION MAKES SENSE

COMPARED TO OTHER OPTIONS...

- ✓ LOWER LONG-TERM OPERATING COSTS
- ✓ SIGNIFICANT ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SAVINGS
- ✓ MODERN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
- ✓ EXPANDED ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES
- ✓ IMPROVED EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES
- ✓ BETTER LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Rather than asking taxpayers to maintain outdated infrastructure indefinitely, this recommendation invests once while reducing future costs.



THIS ISN'T BIGGER. IT'S SMARTER.

WHAT A NEW EAST SIDE HIGH SCHOOL IS NOT:

- More buildings
- More maintenance
- Higher utility costs
- Duplicate administration

WHAT A NEW EAST SIDE HIGH SCHOOL IS:

- Modern classrooms
- Career pathways
- More AP offerings
- Better athletic facilities
- Better security
- Better technology



CAN VIGO COUNTY AFFORD IT?

This question became one of our primary responsibilities.

After reviewing County finances with independent financial advisors, we found:

- County cash balances remain healthy.
- Existing obligations remain manageable.
- The Jail LIT remains untouched.
- Existing financial capacity allows meaningful participation.

Most importantly—

There is a path forward without increasing property taxes.



A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

This recommendation is possible because multiple partners contribute.

Potential funding includes:

- Vigo County
- Vigo County School Corporation
- Casino Foundation
- City participation (if approved)

Together, these partners create a solution that no single organization could accomplish alone.

THIS IS TRULY A COMMUNITY INVESTMENT.



ACCOUNTABILITY MATTERS

We recognize that many taxpayers remain skeptical. Frankly—
They should expect accountability. That is why this
recommendation includes:

- Independent oversight
- Public reporting
- Annual financial updates
- Maintenance commitments
- Ongoing transparency

Taxpayers should never have to simply
"take someone's word for it."

ACCOUNTABILITY IS BUILT INTO THE RECOMMENDATION.



WHY THIS MATTERS BEYOND SCHOOLS

This recommendation is about far more than buildings.
It is about Vigo County's future.

Quality schools influence:

- Workforce attraction
- Business investment
- Property values
- Young families choosing where to live
- Community competitiveness

During stakeholder discussions, business leaders repeatedly expressed concern that continued inaction places Vigo County at a competitive disadvantage when attracting and retaining workforce.

SCHOOLS ARE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE.



THE COST OF DOING NOTHING

Choosing not to act also has consequences. Without a long-term solution:

- WEST VIGO'S FUTURE REMAINS UNCERTAIN.
- MAINTENANCE COSTS CONTINUE INCREASING.
- AGING FACILITIES CONTINUE DETERIORATING.
- STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES REMAIN LIMITED.
- FAMILIES CONTINUE LOOKING ELSEWHERE.
- EMPLOYERS FACE INCREASING WORKFORCE CHALLENGES.

Doing nothing is also a decision—with real long-term costs.



WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Imagine Vigo County five years from now.

- ✓ Modern learning environments
- ✓ West Vigo preserved
- ✓ Expanded STEM opportunities
- ✓ Better extracurricular opportunities
- ✓ Lower long-term maintenance costs
- ✓ Stronger workforce pipeline
- ✓ Increased community competitiveness
- ✓ No increase in property taxes

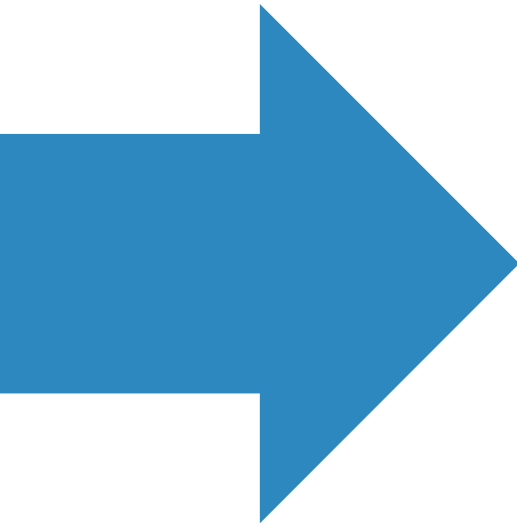
This is not simply a facilities project.

**IT IS AN INVESTMENT IN
VIGO COUNTY'S FUTURE.**



FINAL RECOMMENDATION

After months of independent review, public meetings, financial analysis, and community input, **the Oversight Board believes Vigo County has an opportunity to accomplish something many communities cannot:**



**Modernize our schools.
Preserve West Vigo.
Strengthen our workforce.
Protect taxpayers.
Without increasing property taxes.**

We respectfully recommend moving this funding partnership forward.

VIGO COUNTY INVESTS IN THE FUTURE OF OUR SCHOOLS



- **\$6 MILLION PER YEAR FOR 20 YEARS - VIGO COUNTY**
- **\$2 MILLION PER YEAR FOR 20 YEARS - CITY OF TERRE HAUTE**
- **ACCEPT FULL GIFT FROM THE CASINO FOUNDATION OF NEARLY \$100 MILLION OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS**
- **THROUGH THESE CONTRIBUTIONS, THERE IS A RECOGNIZED ADDITIONAL FUNDING NEED OF \$62 MILLION (BASED ON CURRENT BONDING RATES)**

To preserve West Vigo and positively impact the future of our schools, our recommendation is to utilize the existing bonding capacity of the Vigo County School Corporation to fill this need, which ultimately further protects Vigo County taxpayers.

A low-angle shot of numerous black graduation caps with tassels flying through the air against a clear blue sky. In the lower portion of the frame, the silhouettes of graduates in black gowns are visible, with many of their hands raised in celebration.

**THE QUESTION ISN'T WHETHER
WE CAN AFFORD TO INVEST IN
OUR FUTURE.**

It's whether we can afford not to.



**LET'S BUILD THE
NEXT GENERATION
OF VIGO COUNTY
TOGETHER.**

Thank you.

