



BOND PROJECT UPDATE

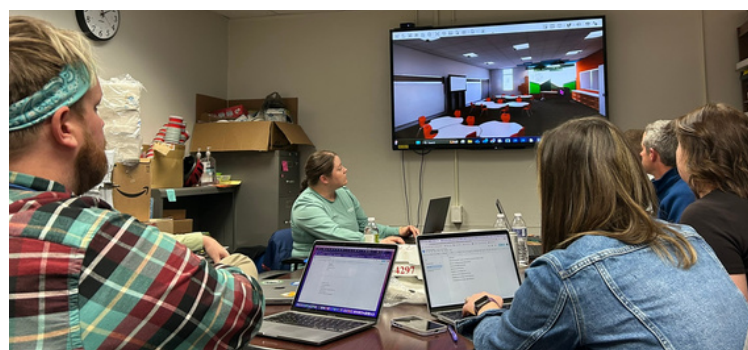
NEW SCHOOL: PRE-K TO 2ND GRADE

Design and Development: A Collaborative Journey

The design of our new elementary school has been a deeply collaborative endeavor, guided by the insights and expertise of Decorah's dedicated staff across four strategically structured phases of **Design Development (DD) meetings**.

- DD1 (April 2–3): The initial phase launched with strong engagement and enthusiasm. Staff members contributed **foundational ideas and priorities**, which played a pivotal role in shaping the preliminary layout and spatial organization of the building.
- DD2 (May 1–2): The second phase focused on **refining specific design elements**. Notably, the Kindergarten team made a thoughtful decision to prioritize two student-accessible bathrooms over additional storage space—an adjustment that better supports daily classroom needs and student well-being.
- DD3 (May 19–20): As the design neared finalization, teams worked to **confirm layout details** in preparation for the bidding process. While most areas were close to completion, several—such as Guidance, the Media Center, Special Education, and English Language Learners (ELL)—required further discussion and refinement.
- DD4 (June 11): The final phase provided **targeted attention to the remaining areas**, ensuring that every space received the consideration it deserved. The resulting design reflects a comprehensive and inclusive vision shaped by the collective wisdom of our school community.

We extend our **sincere appreciation** to all staff who contributed their **time, ideas, and professional insight** throughout this process. Your involvement has left a lasting impact, and we look forward to bringing this shared vision to life.

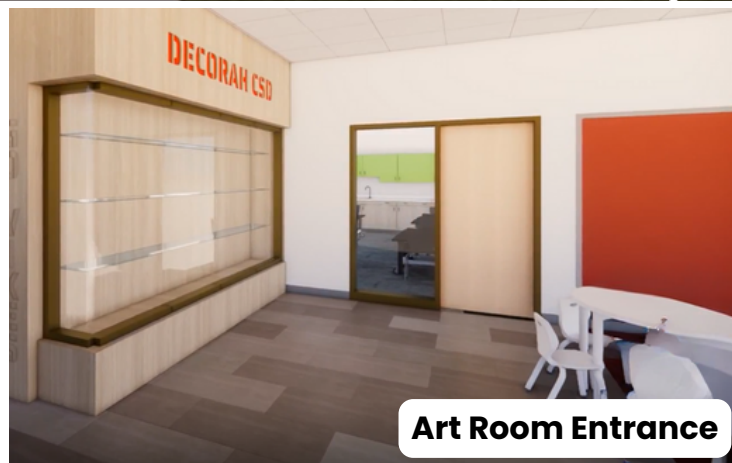


The Decorah Community School District Board of Education includes: **Cindy Goodner** (President), **Ron Fadness** (Vice President), **Brad Darling**, **Carole Sand**, and **Aaron Zander**. Board support is provided by **Darlene Woodhouse** (Board Secretary) and **Joan Loew** (Board Treasurer).

TOGETHER, THEY ARE DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING THE DISTRICT'S MISSION AND ENSURING A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR OUR STUDENTS.

Design and Development : Renderings

*All drawings/renderings are subject to change as design and construction adapts and changes through the construction process.



EMERGENT
ARCHITECTURE



Building Excellence

Designing with Purpose – Playground Spaces

As part of the planning process for the new elementary school, a group of **dedicated educators from John Cline Elementary played a pivotal role in shaping the site plan**, particularly the playground areas. Their involvement ensured the final design reflects the practical needs of both students and staff.

Shannon Tieskoetter (2nd Grade) and Carmen Johnson (Kindergarten) shared that the process began with initial layout concepts reviewed by a volunteer teacher committee. Over three collaborative meetings held between April and June, the group worked closely with administrators and the design team, providing feedback and reviewing updates at each stage. This iterative approach fostered meaningful dialogue and continuous improvement.

Key recommendations from the teacher committee included:

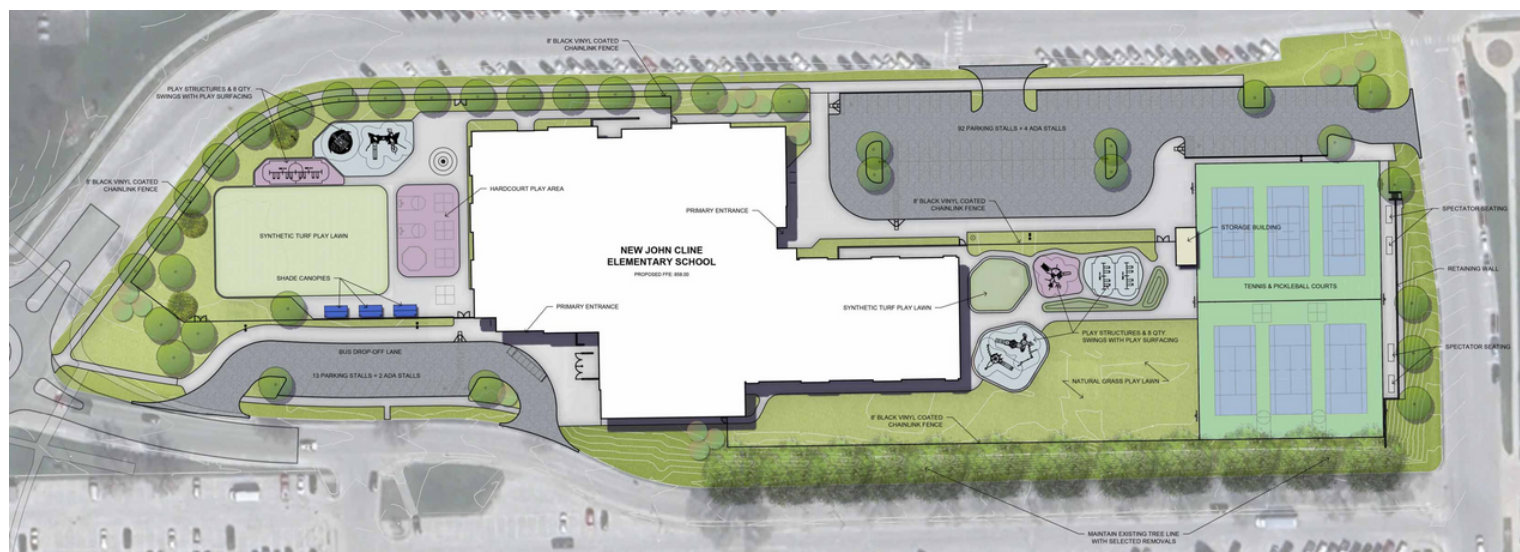
- Including two playgrounds for different age groups
- Increasing the number of swings to support student demand
- Using turf instead of grass to improve drainage and long-term durability
- Expanding green space for early childhood play
- Including fencing to surround each playground area
- Establishing defined line-up areas to enhance safety and organization
- Adding equipment such as four square and basketball to promote active play

Teachers expressed appreciation for the planning team's responsiveness and open communication. **"We felt heard,"** they noted, **"and saw our feedback reflected in the updated plans."**

Looking ahead, the team is most excited about creating playgrounds that are developmentally appropriate, engaging, and safe. **"We can't wait to see students enjoying the new equipment in a secure and stimulating environment."** This collaboration highlights how thoughtful design grounded in classroom experience can create spaces where students thrive.

**A few additional notes:*

- *There is now a bus drop-off area that has its own entrance in the lot to the southwest of the building.*
- *For the larger Decorah community, the site plan also indicates where the **tennis and pickleball courts** will be located.*



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Thank you, Shannon and Carmen, for taking the time to share your insights. It's incredibly valuable to hear directly from those who will be most impacted by these changes, and your input helped shape a better experience for everyone.

HARNESSING NATURAL LIGHT

Sustainable Design at Decorah's New Elementary School

As the Decorah Community School District moves forward with its new elementary school construction, sustainability is taking center stage. One of the strategies is the thoughtful use of natural light.

Daylighting, the practice of designing buildings to maximize sunlight, is helping shape a learning environment that's both energy-efficient and student-focused.

It's fascinating to compare new designs to schools built in the 1960s. Buildings were often constructed with small windows, low ceilings, and a heavy reliance on artificial lighting. Today, Decorah's new school embraces **open, flexible spaces filled with daylight**, creating a brighter, healthier atmosphere for students and staff.

Strategically placed windows throughout the building reduce the need for artificial lighting during the day, while smart lighting systems are available in some areas that automatically adjust based on natural light levels. These systems ensure energy is only used when necessary, blending sustainability with operational efficiency.

By incorporating these modern design principles, Decorah is not only investing in a high-performing building but they're also demonstrating a strong commitment to environmental stewardship and long-term fiscal responsibility. It's a powerful example of how thoughtful design and construction can support both learning and sustainability.

**The use of solar panels is also being explored as we continue to down the design and development process improving our energy efficiency and sustainability measures*



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- Smart lighting
- Higher ceilings
- LED lights
- Window placement
- Energy efficiency

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

In each update, we'll introduce key members of the team helping bring this project to life.

Nick Hildebrandt

**Emergent | Principal Architect |
Educational Design Leader**



Q. How long have you been with Emergent?

I started Emergent in August of 2017

Q. Favorite part about being involved in the new school design in Decorah?

I have been working with the district since before I became an owner at my previous company. I was blessed to work with the district on planning the work at this elementary and the high school. I spent the good part of a couple years coming on site and enjoying Decorah building the high school, and I look forward to doing the same here. I love the area, the people, and the amenities your community offers. This school is an even better representation of the great values and opportunities you have here in Decorah.

Q. Favorite Food?

I am a foodie, so it is hard to just pick one. From a great pasta dish at Rubaiyat to Pizza at Mabe's, I have many favorite foods. I would say that seafood is high on my list, even in Iowa!

Q. Favorite place you've visited?

I spent a semester in college over in Italy. It was life-changing and changed my perspective on many things in this world.

Q. What are your hobbies outside of work?

I love to hang out or travel with family and friends. We golf, ski, hike, try restaurants, and cook for each other. I also play guitar and sing in my church worship band.

Q. Personal goals for next year?

Next year I hope to get two kids into great colleges (one is already).

Daniel Dammann

Miron Construction | Conceptual Estimator



Q. What is your role on the project?

I am a conceptual estimator, which means I help develop early, high-level cost estimates based on limited project information, often during the initial planning and design phases.

Q. How long have you been with Miron?

I have been with Miron construction for 2 years.

Q. Favorite part about being involved in new school in Decorah?

My Favorite part is being able to support a community I have come to enjoy after spending time camping with family in the area.

Q. Favorite food?

I love Chickpea salad with roasted vegetables and hummus dressing.

Q. Favorite place you've visited?

I really enjoyed Charleston. It's the oldest city in South Carolina, founded in 1670, and named after King Charles II.

Q. What are your hobbies outside of work?

Raising a family and running keeps me busy.

Q. Personal goal for next year?

My goal is to run another half marathon.