

School board to decide by mid-September
Last words on K-12 school: Two gyms a must

M. McKinnon
The last bit of input on the public school board's hopes of developing one K-12 school in Atikokan came from Karen Gannon Monday evening.

In a short presentation to the board, she again emphasized the need for two gyms in a K-12 school, presenting supporting evidence of the importance of quality daily physical education, and the positive impact it has been shown to have on Atikokan students. (Grade nine math test scores improved significantly when AHS introduced a new start of day schedule: 35 minutes of phys. ed. followed by 35 minutes of math.)

Gannon also made the case that the design of the school needs to reflect the needs of students of all ages, from Kindergarteners to senior high school students. Education officials have models that guide the design of elementary and high schools, with recommended space allocations. Little research has been done on how space needs change in a K-12 school.

"A K-12 model is necessary to determine the required space," said Gannon. "Three hundred and thirty students in a K-12 school need much more space than three hundred and thirty students in a K-6 school or a 7-12 school."

Seven different proposals for the K-12 school are being considered, with two of them having moved to the top of the list.

Board managers prefer the See 'K-12 school plans', page 6

K-12 SCHOOL PLANS: What the board will be considering

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plan to level most of Atikokan High School as it stands now, saving Grayson Hall, the Outers building, and the existing shops and resource centre area. The latter would be remodelled to include a gym and stage, a combined wood and automotive shop, the existing food and media labs, and a new construction lab.

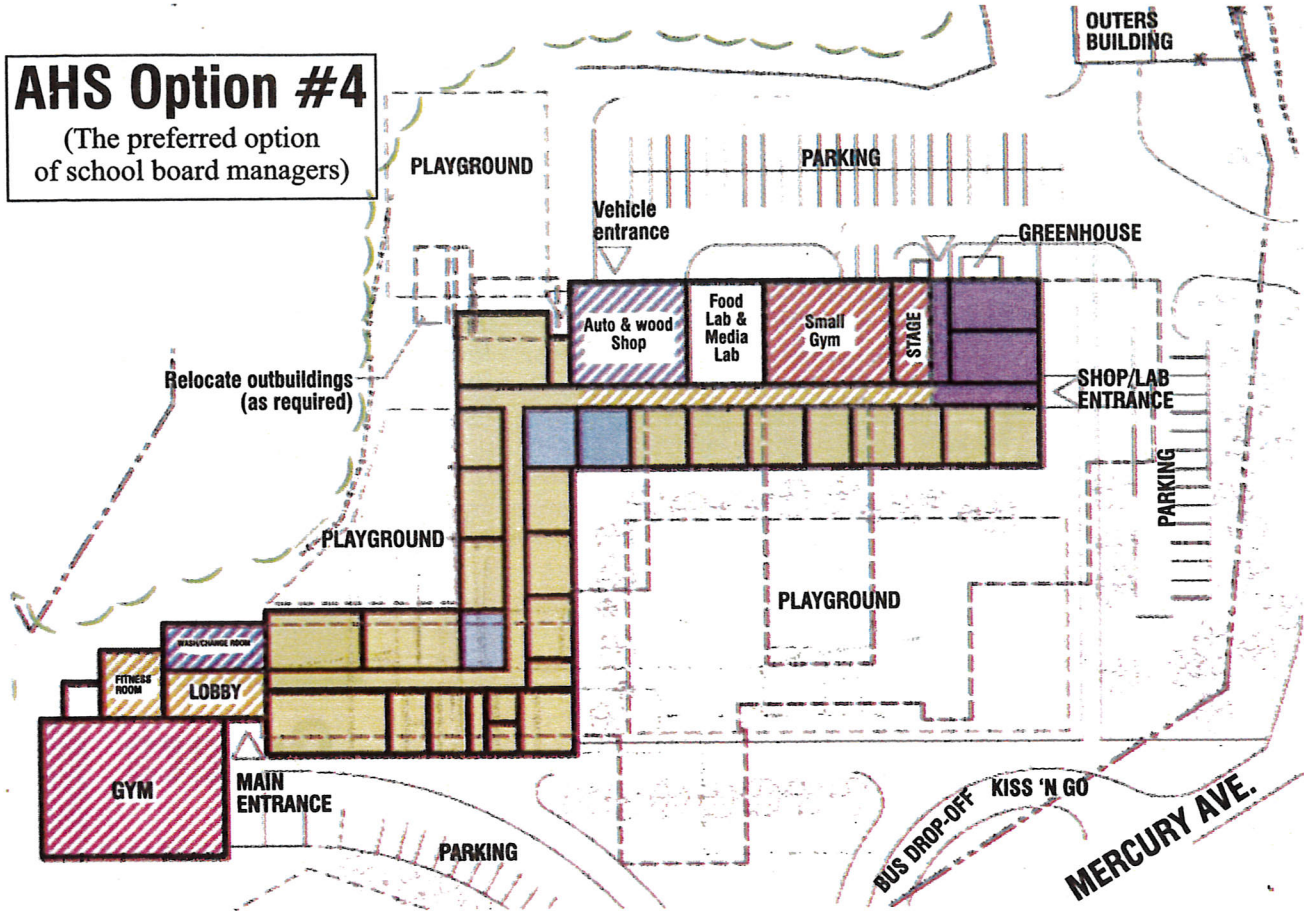
Their second choice is to expand and renovate North Star. Preliminary estimates put the cost of the AHS option at \$17.8 million, and the North Star option at \$12.9 million.

A major factor in the AHS choice is that the North Star facility is much more suitable for redevelopment to some non-school use. Although both were originally built in 1956 and added on to over the years (AHS three

times, most recently in 1985), North Star was fully redeveloped in 1998.

The school board is expected to make a decision by mid-September, then apply for provincial funding. If the province is willing to fund the AHS option, work could begin as soon as the fall of 2018. If the board's proposal is rejected (which is what happened to a similar proposal in Rainy River), or no one can be found to take over the North Star facility, staff recommend the board move on turning the North Star site into a K-12 school.

AHS Option #4
(The preferred option of school board managers)



LEGEND

- New construction - Standard
- New construction - Gym
- New construction - Shops & labs
- New construction - Wash/Change room
- Existing building demolition
- Renovation - Basic
- Renovation - Gym
- Renovation - Shops & labs
- Renovation - Washrooms
- Renovation - Light

North Star Option #1
(The fall back option of school board managers)

Important Note

These are conceptual drawings only, designed to show how a K-12 school might fit into the site spaces. Each shows one possible configuration to illustrate areas of new construction and renovation. Other configurations will be explored once the school board decides which site will be used.

