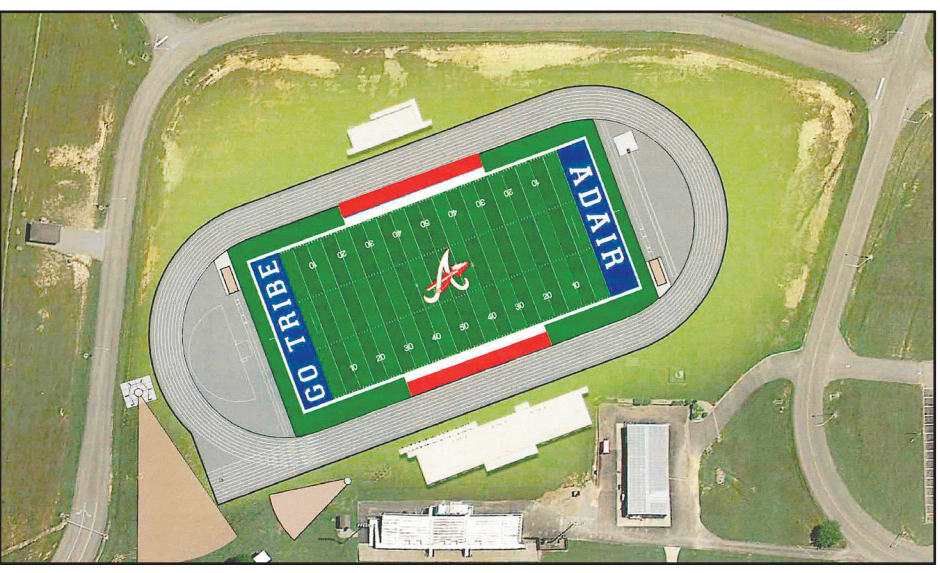
School system study focuses on athletic program needs



A rendering of the potential athletic facilities in a centralized location on campus.

The Adair County school district has more than one field of dreams as leadership pursues advances to athletics facilities.

In late 2022, a study was conducted over the conditions and functionality of the athletic buildings to see what improvements are needed.

The district is concentrating on creating a centralized hub area in the northwest area of the campus so it would be easier to manage and maintain the quality.

"It is a comprehensive plan to be able to address all of our needs over the coming years, and how would that improve the school addressing all those needs?" Craig Biggs, athletic director, said. "It would upgrade all of our facilities and would enhance all programs."

RossTarrant Architects coordinated meetings to determine issues and goals for the athletic programs and the facilities.

The district found it concerning how surrounding districts were upgrading and became worried about future student enrollment. The study allowed for a comprehensive review of current athletic facilities and what additions or changes could allow more space and opportunities for students.

"Make the athletic program better to increase it and enhance it, to be competitive on the district and region and state levels. At a minimum we need to be able to compete with our neighbors. We are having a hard time right now doing that without those facilities," Biggs said.

The track team does not have an area in which to practice and compete on campus. The team has to travel to Lindsey Wilson College to use their track.

The study provides two overall options. The first is to improve the middle school's track conditions. The track would need to be widened to add more lanes for competition, which means wooden light poles would have to be relocated. The surface needs new asphalt installed as well. This is the least desired option to follow.

The second option is to build a new track and field near the football field. Ideas for the new track and field include eight lanes, cushioned and rubberized surface, lighting, bleachers seating up to 600 and concrete pads for an additional 600, infrastructure for track timing systems, field equipment, climate control storage for pads and mats and storage for hurdles.

There would be several benefits to being near a desired new multipurposed athletics building.

The building will include new locker rooms and an indoor training area for multiple programs. The current track would be used for circulation for middle school football field and a community walking path.

According to the study, staff members have issues with the current high school football field. They believe the field sits too close to a low fence at the stands and there is limited space for safe run-outs. The stands are facing the sun, and concessions and bathrooms need to be in a more convenient location.

The field goal is leaning and is considered for replacement. There was a practice field planned to be built but the project stalled, leaving abandoned irrigation lines.

The feasibility study finds that there should be at least one synthetic turf included in these upgrades. If the football field is improved to synthetic turf, then the field is more durable to heavy use and it is less weather dependent. Also, multiple programs could use the field.

To fix these problems, the study includes a proposal to relocate the field and/or revise the field layout.

A new multipurpose building would accommodate many programs by having indoor practice and training space for outdoor sports.

The building would need to be close to the football and softball fields and the proposed locations for the track and soccer fields. The indoor area would additionally have a 40-yard to 50-yard turf with ceiling-hung pitching and hitting tunnels.

The multipurpose building would be intended to be used by multiple programs and incorporate four different phases to accommodate.

Phase one would have a tennis locker room, phase two has a football locker room and phase three is a soccer locker room. Each phase includes restrooms, staff offices and storage.

Phase four would be focused on future programs and more storage space. The band program could use the building for warm-ups and rehearsal.

The plan also calls for a new auxiliary gym. It would be built in the northeast end of the high school gym and help with the demand for space.

The auxiliary gym floor would be at the same elevation of the high school gym to allow use of new and already existing locker rooms, training room and weight room. However, the district prefers to update the current middle school gym rather than build a new one.

There would be additional upgrades to the middle school football stadium, the softball stadium, high school gymnasium, and middle school gymnasium.

The study considers building tennis courts so students can practice and compete on campus. The district has discussed developing a soccer program, so the plan proposes the construction of a soccer complex. The volleyball team would benefit with a larger court and they could practice in the middle school gym if improvements are made to the quality.

All these proposed changes are believed to help with participation in athletic programs and have a positive impact on behavioral issues as well as reduce dropout rates.

"The better your facilities are, the better chance you have to compete. It would give them better practices because they have a better area, playing areas and nice new things. Any time somebody builds something new it gets the kids excited about participating and wanting to do their best to win. Having new facilities will encourage motivation and performance," Biggs said.

The feasibility study has been presented to the school board. No action was required.

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Gardening Tips

ADAIR COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT

Ag and Natural Resources

Nick Roy

Gardening can provide a sense of accomplishment as well as fresh produce for the family. However, gardening also has its fair share of challenges, especially when it comes to weeds, diseases and insects. Here are a few tips that should make this year's garden more of an accomplishment and less of a challenge.

The most important nutrient for plants is water. Many home gardeners find it difficult to provide ample water to the garden during the summer due to lack of time or the garden being located too far from a water source. Mulching the garden helps conserve moisture in the soil, thus reducing the amount by which the garden must be watered.

Mulching also provides a barrier against weeds. Another advantage of mulching that many are not aware of is disease control. Several diseases (especially those that affect tomatoes) are present in the soil. Mulching can prevent soil particles from splashing on the leaves during rainfall, therefore aiding in the prevention of disease.

Various materials found near the soil can serve as excellent mulching materials. Grass clippings, newspapers, shredded paper, cardboard, etc. all help conserve moisture, prevent weeds and disease, and assist in building organic matter in the soil.

Pay close attention when purchasing transplants.

Sometimes diseases start in the greenhouse and become a serious problem later in the garden. Do not purchase plants with leaf spots, lesions on the stems, or other signs that suggest disease is present. As a rule of thumb, locally raised transplants are the least likely to be infected with disease.

Keep a calendar.

Most seed packets will provide you with the average number of days to maturity. Record the planting date on your calendar, and then count forward the days of maturity and make a note on the calendar on that date. While the actual days to maturity will be relative to the weather, knowing the average will help you plan your work in the garden, canning, or freezing. Knowing the relative maturity also comes in handy when waiting for melons to ripen. Pesticide applications and harvest restrictions should also be recorded in the calendar to prevent exposure to chemicals. Additional records that are useful to keep include fertilizer applications, rainfall, and watering dates and amounts.

Have your problems identified.

Whether it is an insect, a disease, or a nutrient deficiency, have the problem identified. Proper identification is the first step to finding a solution when problems arise in the garden. Some diseases are caused by insects; therefore, fungicides are ineffective in those instances. Nutrient deficiencies can sometimes be caused by a lack of moisture or by soil compaction; therefore, fertilizers do not always correct nutrient deficiencies. The Adair County Cooperative Extension Service provides insect and disease identification services free of charge.

For more information, contact the Adair County Extension Service at 270-384-2317.

Adair County schools participating in Summer Feeding Program

The Adair County Board of Education is participating in the Summer Food Service Program.

Meals will be provided to all children, 18 years old and younger, at no charge and are the same for all children regardless of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), age or disability, and there will be no discrimination in the course of the meal service.

Meals will be provided to children at a first come, first serve basis, at the sites and times as follows:

Adair County Middle School:
322 John Adair Dr., Columbia,
June 5 - June 16, breakfast 7:30 a.m.- 8 a.m., lunch 11 a.m. - 11:25 a.m.

Adair County Elementary School:
870 Indian Dr., Columbia,
June 5 - June 29, breakfast 7:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m., lunch 11 a.m. - 11:25 a.m.

Adair County Primary Center:
158 Col. Casey Dr., Columbia,
June 5 - June 29, breakfast 7:30 a.m. - 8 a.m., lunch 10:50 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.