



To: Attendees
From: Joe Patton | JP
Date: April 16, 2021
Comm. No: 212096

Subject: Independent School District #756
Long Range Planning Meeting #1
April 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Discussion Topics:

- A. Introductions.
- B. The group was given an overview of the Long Range Planning process:
 - 1. Consider and understand criteria, which starts by establishing a hierarchy of District “needs”, focusing on the following:
 - a. Physical Criteria (physical conditions, operations, technology infrastructure, safety and security, etc.).
 - b. Educational Criteria (enrollment, capacity, grade configuration, educational adequacy, etc.).
 - c. Activates and Community Criteria (athletics, performances, community use, partnerships, etc.).
 - 2. Develop options to resolve all criteria developed.
 - 3. Evaluate options through discussion.
 - 4. Reach consensus on best approach and ultimately make a recommendation to the School Board.
 - 5. A meeting timeline was reviewed; four to six meetings will likely be needed and will be held each week on Tuesday nights.
- C. A summary of the draft Facilities Analysis was presented:
 - 1. Elementary School:
 - a. Mechanical Systems: Existing steam heating system is outdated, inefficient, and problematic. Water heaters/ systems have surpassed useful life and there is no dehumidification in the gym and cafeteria.
 - b. Electrical Systems: Generator is undersized, fire alarm, and PA system are outdated, and problematic.
 - c. Site: Minor paving issues to address at the parking lot and play areas.
 - d. Exterior: Roof is due for replacement, brick repairs and tuckpointing is needed, and miscellaneous metal doors/ frames are rusting out.
 - e. Interior: Update remaining finishes as needed and replace elevators, which have surpassed useful life.
 - f. Accessibility: Minor issues at restrooms and sinks in classrooms.



2. High School:
 - a. Mechanical Systems: Multiple areas have ventilation issues, water heaters/ systems are inefficient and in poor condition, problems with unit ventilators and heaters and the former locker rooms below stage are problematic.
 - b. Electrical Systems: There are a handful of incandescent lights that should be replaced with LED, and lighting controls need updating.
 - c. Site: Minor paving issues to address.
 - d. Exterior: Exterior materials need minor repairs (brick and stucco), operable windows in the classroom wing are older/ pose a security risk, and some metal doors/ frames are rusting and need replacement.
 - e. Interior: Update finishes as needed, and replace warped/ damaged ACT ceilings throughout building.
 - f. Accessibility: No elevator access to the lower level.
 3. Costs to resolve all items listed at each building above were presented.
 4. It was mentioned that the full Facilities Analysis will be made available for people who would like to review in more detail.
- D. An overview of the Elementary and High School sites was presented:
1. The Elementary School is located in the middle of the town, and is situated on 2.8 acres, with a 2.73 acre park adjacent to the south. Because it is land locked, there is very little to no room for future expansion.
 - a. The MDE guidelines recommend Elementary Schools be on a 15-19 acre site.
 2. The High School is located on the west side of the town, and is situated on a 26.8 acre site, with 10 acres of undeveloped land west of Southeast 84th Avenue, and a 10.17 acre City park to the south.
 - a. The MDE guidelines recommend High Schools be on a 40-45 acre site.
- E. An overview of Elementary and High School capacity was presented:
1. Elementary School:
 - a. Only full time teaching stations count for capacity, which does not include gym, music, art, etc.
 - b. Total capacity is 438 students with five sections of kindergarten, three sections of first grade, four sections of second grade, three sections of third grade, three sections of fourth grade, three sections of fifth grade, and two sections of sixth grade.
 - c. Kindergarten through third grade have class sizes of 20, fourth through sixth grade have class sizes of 24.
 2. High School:
 - a. Because of how High School curriculum is programmed, gym, band, choir, woods, art, etc. are counted as a teaching stations, but there is a utilization factor of 80% applied to the total number to account for students constantly moving from class to class.
 - b. The total capacity is 441 students with 23 total teaching stations and 24 students per station.



- c. There are also identified “potential” teaching stations for rooms that could be taken over if necessary. Potential capacity is 518 students with four additional rooms.
- F. Data and information was presented:
1. Elementary Educational Programming:
 - a. Enrollment is growing. Will require four sections of kindergarten through third grade, and three sections of fourth through sixth.
 - b. Already seeing impacts of current enrollment increases; Music sharing with SMART room, Art moved to the cafeteria, Title 1 is on a cart for 2021-22.
 - c. Early Childhood/ Pre-K programming is limited by capacity; No way to set up for toddler/ ECFE, no before/ after school options for Pre-K, need rooms with toilets.
 - d. Special Education needs three rooms for future (currently have two); need spaces designed appropriately for student needs.
 2. High School Educational Programming:
 - a. Career and Tech Education are in high demand, and need space improvements.
 - b. Band is in the original space, but is making it work.
 - c. Little to no “personalized learning space” or “flex space”; direct support spaces adjacent to learning areas for small group/ independent study. Could address with media center and/or cross corridor pathways.
 - d. Gym space is impacted by Performing Art’s needs (See: Activities)
 3. Security Analysis was presented:
 - a. Both schools have a secured entry sequence at the main entry, but are lacking at other locations around the school (operable windows in classrooms at ground level, missing door contracts/ security cameras, etc...).
 - b. A full security analysis will be made available.
 4. Activities Programming:
 - a. The lack of gym space creates scheduling issues with basketball and volleyball.
 - b. The stage being connected to the gym creates a significant scheduling issue between Performing Arts and sports, and is acoustically not ideal.
 - c. Lacking stadium amenities (concessions, bathrooms, tickets, etc...), and storage.
 5. Community Use Programming:
 - a. Not as many offerings as in the past; classrooms/ educational use is good, but lots of athletic use/ demand.
 - b. Just For Kicks Dance is in the Elementary School cafeteria.
 - c. No free gym time.
- G. Different types of K-12 Funding Sources were briefly explained.
- H. A summary / overview of the data and information was presented:
1. Buildings are in overall good condition with some minor issues to address.
 2. Elementary enrollment is increasing, which is already causing space issues.
 3. District/ Community Goal is to maintain small class sizes and offerings.
 4. Elementary school has little to no expansion possibility.
 5. High School has some areas that need to be updated to current educational approaches.



6. Major scheduling demand on gyms/ performing arts spaces.
- I. Previously considered diagrams were discussed:
 1. We are not presenting these as the best solution, but only for context to show what has already been discussed in the district.
 2. Fifth and sixth grade was shown to move out of the Elementary School and into the High School. The Elementary would have Pre-K-first grade on the main level, and second through fourth graders on the upper level.
 3. An addition was shown at the High School for fifth and sixth grade, and additional gymnasium and auditorium space.
- J. Preliminary criteria discussion:
 1. The group was asked "What do you want to address now? What can wait?", "What are your deal breakers" and "What is most important to the community"?
 - a. We should address the lack of space at the Elementary School with the increasing enrollment numbers.
 - b. Maintain the Blooming Prairie Community; Small class sizes, plenty of support for all students.
 - c. Address "low hanging fruit" mechanical/ electrical systems issues that are affecting operating costs.
 2. A question was posed by a community member to the District, asking if they are seeing any hiring issues with getting qualified applications to fill new positions?
 - a. The District is currently, and has been, seeing plenty of great, highly qualified applicants.
 3. A fifth grade teacher was asked if they foresee any issues with fifth graders mixing with High School students if fifth and sixth grade were moved?
 - a. As long as the building is programmed to properly separate fifth and sixth graders from eleventh and twelfth graders, then it should not be an issue.
 - b. It is important to give fifth graders a proper "fifth grade experience", and provide as smooth a transition from Elementary into the High School as possible.
 4. Can the High School support moving fifth and sixth grade? The cafeteria, gyms, etc. are already strained as is.
 - a. We would have to look at how the increased capacity affects these support spaces.
 5. Is there a possibility to have a Middle School building at a separate site?
 - a. This is a possibility, and a direction many larger School Districts go, but for a District of this size it is not an efficient strategy (need to buy land, operating costs increase, etc.)
 6. Open enrollment was discussed; typically more students open enroll into the District than leave for other Districts, and a majority of students who open enroll in Elementary School stay through High School.
 - a. It was mentioned that funding follows students who open enroll.



7. The question was posed if day care is a need?
 - a. Providing care for student age children before and after school would make a huge impact on the community.
 - b. Providing care for younger than school age children is in huge demand and would be highly beneficial for the community.
8. Where does Blooming Prairie excel? And what are its weaknesses?
 - a. Excels at prepping students for college (high ACT scores).
 - b. Needs help with industrial tech/ agricultural spaces at the High School, and Art / STEM at the Elementary School.

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