



**To:** Dr. Annette Freiheit

**From:** Ben Beery | BB

**Date:** January 7, 2022

**Comm. No:** 9999

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**Subject:** Independent School District #861 - Winona Area Public Schools  
Community Task Force Meeting #4  
December 22, 2021 Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:**

Nancy Denzer, Board Member  
Michael Hanratty, Board Member  
Annette Freiheit, Superintendent  
Brenda Nelson, Independent School District #861  
Laura Watkins, Independent School District #861  
Jeremy Graves, Independent School District #861  
Toni McDevitt, Independent School District #861  
Katie Pearce, Independent School District #861  
Amanda Indra, Independent School District #861  
Julie Biggerstaff, Community Member  
Laura Greseth, Community Member  
Kaylee Haun, Community Member  
Ted Hazelton, Community Member  
Allen Hillery, Community Member  
Kris Lynch, Community Member  
Lindsay O'Shea, Community Member  
Christa Schul, Community Member  
Karen Sullivan, Community Member  
Ed Thompson, Community Member  
Luke Sims, Community Member  
Paul Aplikowski, Wold Architects and Engineers  
Ben Beery, Wold Architects and Engineers

**Discussion Topics:**

- A. Thoughts from the group on the tour of Washington-Kosciusko Elementary:
1. This building lacking green space is a challenge.
  2. The basement is not an ideal learning space, can we eliminate classes there?
  3. Mankato Avenue presents safety challenges on site.



- B. The group received a presentation from Heather Fitzloff, WSHS on Career and Technical Education.
1. Questions from the Task Force:
    - a. Superintendent Freiheit pointed out that graduation requirements (science for example) could be achieved through some of the courses in CTE. This is a great opportunity for students looking for hands on experiences for their learning.
    - b. Repeat the statistic, approximately:
      - 1) 48% - Four year college
      - 2) 24% - Technical college
      - 3) 24% - Workforce
      - 4) Remainder go to the military
    - c. Avid has shifted to a more career and college focus than in recent years. There is lots of opportunity for overlap with CTE, especially if spaces were updated.
    - d. Is additional space needed?
      - 1) Answer: Unsure, it's possible. It is definitely outdated. This includes equipment.
      - 2) Wold offered that the amount of space dedicated is on the generous side but re-thinking the layout to be more flexible might better serve the area.
- C. Wold presented a research article from a School District on grade configuration:
1. Is there data to suggest that grade transitions as a whole cohort is better?
    - a. It is suspected that it is better but there are still transitions, aside from peers (teachers, administration, classes etc.).
  2. What is the ideal occupancy of a building?
    - a. No magic answer – stable enrollment Districts often plan around 90% capacity.
  3. It feels like it is often said that there is not enough space or we are tight but that it does not jive with the capacity report:
    - a. Wold offered that localized bubbles in class sizes (i.e. this grade has another section), special education and other support services are using classroom space which can make it feel like there is not enough space.
    - b. It was stated by a group member that there are unused classrooms at the High School and likely the Middle School.
  4. A question was asked if there is a number of sections or size of school that is ideal?
- D. The group worked on an “open space” activity to begin the process of identifying needs. The results are listed below:
1. Theme A Repairs:
    - a. Needs Statements:
      - 1) We need to engage the community to help them understand what our repair needs are.
      - 2) We need to balance deferred maintenance with additions and new space that would allow efficiency and conducive learning environments.
      - 3) We need to clearly identify what can and what cannot be repaired, and what the costs will be.
      - 4) We need our publically used facilities to be maintained at a consistently high quality standard.
      - 5) We need to recognize that repair needs will continue through the years and plan spending accordingly.



- b. Post-it Notes:
  - 1) WSHS – Auditorium, do it all.
  - 2) We need to fix what we have to make it a conducive environment.
  - 3) Balance deferred maintenance with additions and new space that would allow efficiency if under one roof (ex. K-4 configuration or other grade configurations).
  - 4) Outdated.
  - 5) All buildings are in need.
  - 6) All the phase repairs.
  - 7) Bathrooms at Paul Giel field.
  - 8) Paul Giel restrooms.
- 2. Theme B Moving Reconfiguring:
  - a. Needs Statement:
    - 1) With current capacity we need to shift grades and programs to best utilize our space and facilities to best serve the needs of all students.
    - 2) Need to re-imagine use of Washington-Kosciusko backing (Ex. District Offices, community ed. miller mentoring, space rental).
    - 3) We need to plan for universal Pre-K and should plan for wrap around care.
    - 4) Move the LEO! Now!
  - b. Post-it Notes:
    - 1) Jefferson seventh and eighth grade.
    - 2) Daycare at Elementary Schools.
    - 3) Plan for Pre-K through fourth grade.
    - 4) What can/could our buildings look like with re-imagining?
    - 5) Multi-grade classes.
    - 6) Cafeteria to basement Washington-Kosciusko, Jefferson.
    - 7) Elementary: Large classes and rooms with team teachers.
    - 8) Can we repurpose Washington-Kosciusko for community use?
    - 9) Third through sixth grade at Winona Middle School.
    - 10) Early Childhood / Early Intervention Space.
    - 11) Can seventh and eighth grade be at WSHS but separate wing?
    - 12) Pre-K through second grade Goodview and Washington-Kosciusko.
    - 13) Add gym to Washington-Kosciusko, Jefferson, Goodview, and repurpose former Physical Education space for classes.
- 3. Theme C Public Perception:
  - a. Needs Statement:
    - 1) We need to market to the public to help them understand the need for curb appeal and modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century spaces to attract enrollment.
    - 2) Need to create an appealing plan to promote support amongst the public.
    - 3) Need to create partnerships and collaborative relationships with community businesses and institutions.
    - 4) Working with businesses and others to work toward meeting needs of community.
    - 5) CTE programs at High School.
  - b. Post-it notes:
    - 1) Can the \$16M maintenance bond be rescinded after January 6, 2022 vote?
    - 2) Keep bond ten years maximum or plan farther out.
    - 3) Enrollment!



- 4) Marketing to public:
    - a) As a business (not as a school).
    - b) To modernize buildings to suit 21<sup>st</sup> Century curriculum, learning.
  - 5) Do not tether school closure this time at reshuffle.
  - 6) Keep our schools neighborhood schools.
  - 7) Kolter Wing:
    - a) Shows us our possibilities.
  - 8) Curb Appeal – Exterior Appearances.
  - 9) Current facilities (Washington-Kosciusko and Jefferson) are not attractive to new families.
  - 10) We need to help the community understand our needs better (e.g. deferred maintenance, operating costs).
  - 11) Marketing earlier and meeting families where they are.
  - 12) Updated athletic facilities could bring our District money.
  - 13) How do we market WAPS and make our space viable and attractive?
  - 14) Improving our approach in attracting new/more students for increased enrollment.
4. Theme D Accessibility:
- a. Needs Statement:
    - 1) Every student, staff member, and community member needs equitable access to our facilities.
  - b. Post-it Notes:
    - 1) All WK students do not have access to same doors as classmates. Segregated to front door away from classmates.
    - 2) Make buildings communicate that students using walking aids are welcome.
    - 3) Lack of accessibility to basement classrooms at Jefferson.
    - 4) Lack of accessibility to basement classrooms at Washington-Kosciusko.
    - 5) Jefferson students using walking aids are not allowed access to the same entrances as classmates.
    - 6) 20% WK students have adequate bathroom access during Physical Education class.
    - 7) Inclusive bathrooms / lockers in our buildings.
5. Theme E Upgrades:
- a. Needs Statement:
    - 1) District needs extra gym space.
    - 2) We need a second gym at the High School to allow more students the chance to participate in Physical Education classes and athletic events.
    - 3) We need a vision for partnerships with the community to create and use fine arts spaces and athletic spaces.
    - 4) We need to re-imagine classroom space to allow for collaboration and flexible learning.
    - 5) We need adequate and equitable locker rooms for our female students and designated locker room space for visitors.
    - 6) We need play space for younger middle school students (fifth and sixth)
    - 7) We need more activity space for student and community use so that students are home earlier and more can participate.



- b. Post-it notes:
  - 1) Just break down most interior walls and reframe.
  - 2) Add gym at High School.
  - 3) Add visitor locker rooms:
    - a) Turn women's locker room into visitor locker room.
  - 4) Flexible classroom spaces:
    - a) Windows, collaborative space, temporary walls.
  - 5) Upgrade women's locker room. New locker room to be women's.
  - 6) Dome at High School.
  - 7) Playground for five and six year olds!
  - 8) Activity needs - gym space.
  - 9) Efficiencies of space for teaching space.
  - 10) Practice / games – space / time.
  - 11) Reconfigure music suite WSHS (especially storage).
  - 12) Partnership with City and County and WSU/St. Mary's SE Tech.
- 6. Theme E 21<sup>st</sup> Century
  - a. Needs Statement:
    - 1) We need flexible/multiple-use spaces to meet the needs of all learners and educators.
    - 2) We need to help students, parents, community members and teachers understand what 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning entails.
    - 3) We need to be sure that grade configurations support a maximized growth and change in 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning (e.g. needs are different in different grades).
    - 4) Pre-K needed in all Elementary Schools with transportation so the students remain in our district buildings.
  - b. Post-it notes:
    - 1) Current facilities are not conducive to 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning needs.
    - 2) Using enrollment numbers, brainstorm grade configuration to better maximize capacity (ex. grades seven through twelve and Pre-K through sixth grade).
    - 3) Centralized ECFE/Pre-K for efficiency, easy transition in numbers to K.
    - 4) Flexible multi-use spaces that are adaptable to needs.
    - 5) The need for rooms that hold 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning bigger.
    - 6) Pre-K programs not in all Elementary Schools.
    - 7) Flexible 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning spaces.
    - 8) Flexible space.
    - 9) Collaborative learning spaces.
- E. Wold read the charge statement from the School Board. Does the group feel like they have all the resources needed to start constructing plan?
- 1. The financial end of the equation is not known yet. This will be studied at future meetings.
- F. Key Messages:
  - 1. Challenge ahead: How do we educate the community on the importance of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning?
    - a. Can we show examples of this within our community? The Kolter wing may be a great example.
  - 2. Challenge ahead: How do we educate the community about the current status of our facilities?
- G. Next meeting at January 12, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at Goodview Elementary.



cc: Jackie Goyette, Community Member  
Julie Heinrichs, Community Member  
Drew Kings, Community Member  
David Kuklinski, Community Member  
Andy Pierce, Community Member  
Theresa Sadler, Community Member

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