

ELPS Elementary Teacher Survey Findings

June 18, 2012

APPENDIX G

9/5/12

Q1. What do you see as the GREATEST FACILITY NEEDS in our three elementary schools, both now and for the future?

Spaces – size and accessibility, flexibility, appropriate square footage for program needs
Deteriorating structures
Ventilation and heating/air conditioning needs, air quality
Natural lighting
Technology needs
Parking needs/Bus flow safety
Small group/instructional areas
Large common areas for collaboration centrally located in each cluster
Windows problematic
Auditorium/stage area dedicated to the Arts (larger spaces)
Safety /code issues/handicap accessibility/energy efficient
Acoustics/soundproofing
Bathroom facilities for staff
More multi-purpose areas
Technology infrastructure
Additional electricity
Better Lighting
More diverse technology spaces
Collaboration
Geothermal
More storage for instruments, books, equipment
Science room for 4th graders
Teach more life skills
Efficient movement in building and efficiency of building space
Maintaining a small community atmosphere
Collaborating with 4-5 PLC members versus 10-12 with one large complex
Sinks, counter space, computers
Eliminate carpeting
Library Media Center and Technology Center should be adjacent areas
Room for all day Kindergarten
Gym and cafeteria areas separate
Daycare for staff

Q2. In designing classroom and school spaces for any future renovation or construction project, what are the MOST IMPORTANT EDUCATIONAL AND WORKPLACE ELEMENTS to include in the project? (examples: excellent ventilation; natural lighting; collaborative workspaces; classroom clusters by grade level)

Space/classroom sizes
Ventilation
Lighting – large windows
Flexible furniture
Central locations for specialty areas (close proximity)
Performance area with good acoustics
Gymnasium
Media Center
Storage space for teacher materials, instruments, books
Science lab
Outdoor classroom and learning areas – nature area, greenhouse
Outdoor eating areas for students
Wireless access
Ability to hang work samples on walls, etc.
Multi-use rooms
Collaborative work spaces
Common team areas
Outdoor learning, easy access, courtyards
Clusters grade levels or multigrade
Separating cafeteria and gym
Security system
Handicap accessibility
Strategic placement of related services
Developmentally appropriate spaces
Flexible/dividing walls are less practical due to noise volume
Community access
Classroom configurations
Common space for grade levels
Big windows
Expandable rooms
Build according to “developmental” age level
Middle School 3-8 or 4-8 based on need of enrollment and tax payer approval
Indoor and outdoor performance spaces
Ability to regulate temperature
Food court – more healthy alternative
See Question #1
Therapists in close proximity to Early Childhood
Amplification in all classrooms
Areas for paraprofessionals to work in the classroom
Separate cubbies
Integrated special services/intervention services (not isolated from classrooms)
Flexibility in physical space
Quiet work spaces for students to “take a break” when needed, tutoring/testing spaces
Bigger nursing rooms

Q3. In designing school improvements, which COMMUNITY USES for our facilities are important TO PRESERVE AND/OR INCLUDE? (examples multiple gym spaces; outside play areas.)

Area for technology use
Playgrounds
Multiple and safe gym and music spaces
Media Center with movie theater
Fitness Center
Auditorium spaces w/stage
Multi use rooms
Outdoor play equipment
Track/outdoor fields/facilities
Scouts/Park and Recreation events and activities
Open space to run
Birth – 3 consideration
Safe exits (easy access to outside)
Fenced in playground
Age appropriate play areas
Placement of classrooms
After School Programs/activities
Adult education classes
Photography classes – darkroom
Book Clubs in Media Center
Theater/Auditorium – dance and drama
Distance learning
Adult work spaces, conference rooms
Parenting and family rooms
Community meeting area

4. What are your reactions to the three options that the committee is now considering (the option numbers correspond to the option numbers on the attached template of options.)?

Option #2: RENOVATE ALL THREE EXISTING BUILDINGS AS "NEW CONSTRUCTION" (New construction means a complete renovation of the buildings, bringing them into compliance with all current codes and standards for lighting, ventilation, heating, accessibility, etc.)

Most expensive option
Existing structure will need replacement
Declining enrollment consideration
Needs long term plan
Tough to lose NCS – property, value
Opportunities for community work, education
Even distribution of school population
No connection between schools
Parents like neighborhood schools
3 schools maintains community relations with Niantic and maintains individual "personalities" of schools
Beautiful location
No change
Classrooms need to be larger and better design of subject areas location
Need more storage
Class sizes are not equitable
Not cost effective
No need for 3 schools
Location allows student to be involved with Crescent Point seniors and learn about town services
What about K-8 schools?
Inconvenient to populations
Healthier buildings
Same bus routes
Reasonable/small school populations
Fluctuate with population change

Option #3: DISCONTINUE USE OF NIANTIC CENTER SCHOOL AND RENOVATE HAYNES AND FLANDERS AS "NEW CONSTRUCTION." Make the necessary changes to Flanders and Haynes to accommodate full-day kindergarten and any other uses identified by the community.

Easier vertical and grade level planning for PLCs
Maintain a sense of community
Less travel time for students/families
Lose small school feel
Cost effective
Maintains neighborhood feel
Smaller staffs make collaboration easier
Housing for district-wide services?
Equity of resource/program
Busing easier, but potentially longer routes
LBH – access to ELMS FL – access to HS
Loss of staffing concern
Impact to common planning time?
5th grade should not be in middle school
Best option
PK-2 building and 3-5 building?
Less intrusive in terms of teaching?
There should be 2 schools
Flexibility for facility use
Preschool
Complete renovations
Best return in tax grants from state
Likely to pass referendum
Most realistic choice

Option #5: DISCONTINUE USE OF ALL THREE (3) ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AND BUILD A NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COMPLEX ON A SINGLE SITE. The complex could include separate wings for primary and upper elementary, with shared common spaces such as recreation spaces, library-media, cafeteria, etc.

PLCs become too large for effective planning unless grades are broken into teams
More consistency having one complex
Easier to work collaboratively w/whole elementary district, communication enhanced
Availability of resources
More economical
More "state of the art" if one facility
Feeling of ownership and fresh start
Possible vertical and group learning opportunities
Staff and resource sharing
No site identified
Too big, intimidating; loss of community feel
Property cost
Time students ride bus
Research does not support this model
Students may not feel as supported/noticed/nurtured
Difficulty for faculty to know all students
Quality of new construction
Concern about preserving individual school cultures
Opportunities for programming that may not be possible in other plans
Need to keep LEARN and PreK programs in the elementary schools to promote inclusive practices
Huge transition/undertaking
Unsure of future enrollment
Parking nightmare
Scheduling phys ed and specials could be affected
Central location
Could have 2 libraries, 2 principals, etc.
Equitable class sizes
Philosophy change
Lunch wave concerns
Consolidation of services
PTA organizations may not feel as connected or invest in larger school complex
Increased behavioral problems?
Procedural issues with increased amount of paperwork for remedial/intervention students
Students will not make as deep/varied social connections
Decreased field trips?
Rental/sale opportunities of old buildings

Q5: Any OTHER IDEAS you would like the Facilities Vision Task Force to consider in its deliberations?

Arts and science integration into all space

Natural habitats

How is PreK standardized across the district?

Will funding from state change in the next 3-5 years as this plan moves forward?

Consideration of one building with PreK-2 and other building 3-5

Anonymous survey given to MS teachers to see how the new facility they work in has turned out

Move CO to MS/one less building to maintain

Use MS as an option for older grades and use that space during renovations

Scheduling of specials needs to be carefully considered for Options 3, 4 or 5 especially

Talk to and visit Waterford and other districts with new facilities and same ideas

10-year phase in plan – good marketing plan

Preserve center for psych and social worker based on clinical model

Additional option – merge/add fourth grade to the MS and renovate new LBH to make a centralized elementary school PK-3

