

Meeting #9 Summary – December 3, 2020

I: Welcome and Introductions

**Penny Mabie** welcomed committee members, provided a walkthrough on logistics and best practices for remote meetings via Zoom, and briefly explained the meeting’s agenda. **Jon Holmen** introduced himself to the group as the new LWSD Superintendent and shared his appreciation for the FAC’s work to address facilities needs while centering the mission and vision for LWSD students.

II: Community Survey

Having been sent the completed results of the community survey ahead of the meeting, FAC members were asked to share their thoughts and what stood out to them from the community feedback.

Committee responses:

- Conflicting observations regarding prioritizing capacity needs and aging needs
- Moving the Environmental and Adventure school (EAS) was suggested as a project to be removed
- A lot of comments advocating for Alcott and Dickenson projects
- Many comments regarding choice school, some comments noting they lead to inequities across the district, such as transportation accessibility
  - Seems like the district should share additional information regarding benefits to building choice schools
  - Program decisions go beyond the scope as a Facilities Advisory Committee but could discuss equity/flexibility in relation to school options and outcomes.
- Desire for projects to happen across learning areas; mindset of if you’re doing a project over there, you should also do a project over here”
  - Also “our school is older” – may be due to lack of awareness of a building’s age and previous updates
- From a City perspective, I’m seeing three themes: enrollment growth, planning for future growth, and facilities needs. There is interest from the cities in working closely with the district on how to approach these needs
  - City of Sammamish committee member shared perspective of Sammamish City Council is that development should pay more of its share of growth and the City is interested in working closely with LWSD and City of Issaquah
- Some commenters were curious to know more about the possibility of continuing remote learning and asked for more data and how remote learning has affected enrollment
- There is a need for more communication and sharing of information to improve community understanding and awareness of facilities needs

**Q:** Do we currently have information on how remote learning has affected enrollment numbers?

**A:** Yes, we are currently lower than our projections by about 600-800 students due to remote learning. However, it's also important to note that the percentage of enrollment decline in LWSD is lower than other school districts throughout King County (KC) (we are at about a 1.5% decline while the average decline in KC is 3.29% with a range from 1.1-8%). This shows families are committed to our schools, and we fully expect enrollment numbers to increase and the facilities need to exist when in-person schooling resumes.

**Q:** Are there currently any plans to integrate remote learning into practice even when in-person schooling resumes?

**A:** We're able to implement remote learning now and receive funding for it based on current state rules regarding attendance. Moving forward, districts have to align remote learning with alternative learning education (ALE) rules and requirements in order to receive funding. We did hire a remote academy principal to help develop a program with implementation beginning next year. We're still studying and making plans, but at this point remote learning would have to align with ALE program rules.

**Q:** I imagine there's government funding set aside for education. Is it possible for LWSD to receive or lobby for additional funding?

**A:** The challenge is that our state as a whole is experiencing an economic downfall, so the State's priority is looking at how to save money. If you're interested in hearing more about impacts specifically to LWSD, you can [go to our website](#) to watch the October 5th LWSD School Board Study Session, where more information on budget impacts was shared.

- **ACTION ITEM: Provide additional information on effects of remote learning in LWSD and other local districts.**

**Q:** There were comments in favor of more choice schools and in favor of fewer choice schools. Some comments focused on the program side rather than the facilities. Is there a benefit to choice schools over comprehensive from a facilities aspect?

**A:** Choice schools and programs are created to meet specific needs and interests. They use innovative approaches to education that may be different from our comprehensive schools. The decision was made not to build a comprehensive high school as the district does not have the approximately 40 acres that is needed. Choice schools can also draw students across the district to help alleviate capacity at our comprehensive schools. Choice schools are not a fit for every student as they have narrower course offerings and can't offer lots of options. Choice schools allow the district to provide options for students without full facilities. Approximately ten percent of our student population attend choice schools.

### **III: Recommendations review and revision**

The committee split into five small groups to begin revising the FAC recommendations based on community feedback gathered from the survey. Each group focused on one of each of the following project recommendation categories: elementary school, middle school, high school, other facilities needs, and finance phasing options. The FAC then reconvened as a large group and shared what proposed edits were discussed in each of the small groups.

### ***Elementary School***

- Keep potential future needs in mind when deciding location and design of schools
  - For example, consider the potential future use of a plot of land where a comprehensive school is being built – is there space/flexibility for a small choice school to be added in the future if needed?
- No recommended changes to the current narrative of the recommendations

### ***Middle School***

- Clarify reasoning behind recommendation to rebuild or expand Kamiakin– some questions about space available on the property
- EAS/Stella community expressed concerns regarding moving
- Emphasize the purpose is to meet capacity needs – a lot of comments were about programs and not facilities
- Emphasize reboundary alone will not address all capacity needs
- Address issues with remote learning and be open to adaptability/flexibility going forward

### ***High School***

- Clarify reasoning for proposing new choice high schools is based on limited site availability for a fifth comprehensive high school
  - Clarify that this is in alignment with the district’s long-range strategic plan
- Some concern around equitability of choice schools – when including topic of equitability in the recommendations report, focus on equity in relation to facilities planning

### ***Other facilities needs***

- Reframe language around Juanita field house and pool recommendation as a benefit to the community as a whole
  - Continue looking for partnerships for recreation facilities that are not solely used by schools
- Clarify that preschools don’t necessarily need to move off of elementary school campuses, they just need to have an appropriate amount of space needed (i.e., attached bathrooms, outdoor play space)

### ***Finance phasing options***

- Update text to reflect that community responses mostly prefer a two-phase option
- Some worry community won’t pass large bonds – would be helpful to further educate voters about what the bond(s) would do
  - Typically, a bond and levy advisory committee is assembled with a variety of community representatives to address this – district hoping to have some FAC members join when the time to convene that committee comes
  - Shouldn’t assume people won’t pass a large bond, a multimillion-dollar hospital bond was recently passed by local voters

**Q:** Are there any other areas that we haven't covered that the school board is looking for more input?

**A:** They're interested in alternative locations and potentially more flexible schooling. With the challenge of acquiring land and capacity needs spread throughout the region, the board is interested in exploring alternative locations for school settings.

- **ACTION ITEM: Add section to the recommendations report that notes flexible locations and schooling should be considered by the board**

After the full group discussion, Penny asked for some volunteers to work on editing and finalizing the draft recommendations, based on the full group's discussion and feedback. Kim Mendenhall, Mindy Lincicome, Julie Akhter, and Diana Lafornera volunteered to form this writing group.

#### **IV: Support Services Facilities Assessment**

**Jason Romine** and **Brian Trapp** with JPC Architects gave a presentation to the FAC on facility needs for LWSD support spaces, such as administrative office space, support services and training space. Their assessment found that as the district grows, the need for support space has also grown, supporting a need for more administrative facilities such as office space and training spaces.

**Q:** Could administrative capacity needs be met with remote working?

**A:** Perhaps some remote work can continue to a degree, but our work happens best when in person and we don't see being able to gain capacity by full-time remote work.

#### **V: Next steps**

The volunteer writing group will meet and work to update the draft recommendations report based on survey responses and proposed revisions discussed at this meeting. The FAC will meet for one last meeting on January 7, 2021 to review and approve the recommendations to be finalized and shared at the upcoming LWSD board meeting.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- **Provide additional information on effects of remote learning in LWSD**
- **Add section to the recommendations report that notes flexible locations and schooling should be considered by the board**