The Olentangy Facilities Committee Meeting
April 2, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.
Olentangy Administrative Offices- Berlin Room

In attendance for the Facilities Committee were:

- ☑ Eisenhower, Frank
- ☑ Eisinger, Brian
- ☐ Gilliam, Jarrod
- ☐ King, Dave
- ☑ McCaughey, Kevin
- ☑ Rogers, Greg
- ☑ Scott, Mark
- ☐ Smith, Wesley
- ☐ Troxell, Joe

Also in attendance were Bruce Runyon (Fanning Howey), Todd Boyer (Fanning Howey), Macy Whittaker (Fanning Howey), Bill O'Sullivan (Construction Analysis), Dr. Kevin Daberkow (BOE Representative), Lizett Schreiber (BOE Representative), Carla Baker (OLSD), Vince DeTillio (OLSD), Jeff Gordon (OLSD) and Michelle Murphy (OLSD).

Frank Eisenhower called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the night's agenda and the minutes from the March 5, 2025 meeting.

Kevin McCaughey moved, and Brian Eisinger seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Kevin McCaughey moved, and Greg Rogers seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

<u>Middle School Planning-</u>

OLSD Principal Carla Baker was a guest speaker at the evening's meeting. She is currently the principal at Berkshire Middle School. She shared a presentation with members regarding the impact that larger student enrollment numbers have on the students, staff, parents (and the school facility) at the middle school level. A copy of her presentation notes is available upon request through the district's Business Office.

Ms. Baker has been the principal at Berkshire Middle School for numerous years. She has presided over the school with student enrollments as low as 850 students and as high as around 1320 students. The school building was designed for a preferred student enrollment of about 900-950 students. She emphasized that daily operations at Berkshire Middle School with over 1300 students were very hard. She explained that it was difficult for the following reasons:

- There was not enough space in the building. Most spaces had to be shared and non-traditional spaces (such as meeting rooms, stages, storage areas and hallways) were being utilized to address the overflow needs of staff and students.
- No planning areas or collaboration areas were available for staff.
- Obvious stress and anxiety were apparent within the staff.
- Student pick-up and drop-off times were chaotic and challenging. School almost never started on time in the mornings because of the increased traffic outside of the building.
- The staff had to be creative during pick-up and drop-off times to improve the safety conditions for students. For example, at the end of the day students were released with

a three-zone method so that they were not all at the bus area at the same time. This method increased the time that it took to release the buses for the day. However, it also increased the safety for the students because it was easier for the staff to monitor them in smaller groups.

- Hall change time was incredibly crowded and stressful (especially for the students who were not comfortable in crowds).
- Cafeteria lines were long, and cafeteria seating had to be expanded to use the stage in the Commons (which was difficult to monitor).
- Restrooms were crowded and it was difficult to keep them clean with the large volume of use that they were getting. Additional daytime cleaning services had to be arranged.
- There were more student "incidents" during the day. The incidents ranged from confusion related challenges to student behavioral issues to small scale accidents or missteps.
- There was more sickness in the student and staff populations.
- There were more random disruptions during the day.
- There was less student opportunity for extra-curricular activities.
- There were fewer teachers and staff available to coordinate extracurricular activities.
- There was more wear and tear on the building. Repairs in the building were needed much more frequently. The stairwells, hallways, carpeting, cafeteria and restrooms were some of the areas most impacted by the larger student enrollments.
- Parent complaints increased. Concerns over student anxiety or choir rooms being used for study halls were a few examples of issues that parents addressed.

Ms. Baker shared that if a middle school were to be "right sized" for an increased student population she would suggest:

- Adequate cafeteria space and seating
- Additional classroom space
- Additional planning and collaboration space
- Additional parking space and enlarged pick-up and drop-off space
- Adequate space for choir, band, art, science and family consumer science activities

Chair Fank Eisenhower asked what number the "pain point" started at the middle school level for enrollment. Ms. Baker believed it to be somewhere around 1000 to 1100 students in her building.

Members in attendance thanked Ms. Baker for taking the time to share her professional insight with the committee. They found the information to be interesting and helpful in the planning process for the future of middle schools in the district.

Mr. Vince DeTillio (Curriculum Director for OLSD) attended the meeting to share with members the curriculum "model" envisioned for the district. OLSD strives to implement a "middle school model" for its middle school students as opposed to a "junior high" approach. This is because middle school students are at an age where their needs are very different (both academically and socio-emotionally).

In a middle school model, students are broken down into groups of approximately 100 students (out of the total enrollment) and assigned the same group of instructors for their varying coursework.

This allows the instructors to get to know the students better and provides a more personalized approach to the students' learning experience. The students also have an "advisory period" built into their day which allows them better access to their instructors during the day for any additional support that they may need.

In a "junior high model" (which is typically only 7th and 8th grade) the curriculum functions more similarly to a high school in that large groups of students randomly share a variety of instructors at different times and with less access to them. This results in less continuity, less support and an overall less personalized approach to learning for the students.

Regardless, with larger student enrollments at the middle school level it is difficult for the staff to get to know the students with either model, but especially with the "junior high" structure/approach to curriculum. However, the "middle school model" approach also becomes less effective with larger student enrollment numbers.

Members thanked Mr. DeTillio for his insight and proceeded into a general question and answer session/discussion as follows:

- Dr. Daberkow asked Mr. DeTillio if there was any research-based information for optimum sq. ft. per student ratio for OLSD MS buildings? Mr. DeTillio was uncertain as to an exact number. He would be happy to research it further.
- Members asked for verification of class size. Ms. Baker advised that the district's teacher's union contract district wide average of 25 students (or less) to one teacher was preferred. However, with larger enrollments, class sizes have swelled up to a 32 to 1 ratio. Larger student enrollments would require more classrooms and more teachers to stay at or below the 25 to 1 average.
- Bruce Runyon shared that he would consult the OFCC guidelines for square foot per student guidelines. He believes that it has changed very little since the 1990's.

Jeff Gordon proceeded to share a PowerPoint presentation with members in attendance regarding middle school facility planning. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available upon request through the district's Business Office. Highlights of the presentation included:

- A list of the largest middle schools in Ohio (and their districts).
- OLSD has 6 of the top 41 largest middle schools in Ohio.
- More than one gym is needed for middle schools designed for larger enrollments.
- Larger cafeteria spaces are needed.
- More classroom space is needed.
- More parking and access infrastructure is needed. However, the site size and site attributes may limit what can be done with this.
- Pricing to build a new middle school was compared to estimates to add spaces onto the district's existing middle schools. The cost to add spaces onto the existing middle schools appeared to be equal to (or greater than) the cost to build a new middle school.
- There are a lot of variables to be considered when adding onto the existing buildings. More research needs to be done regarding the underground infrastructure on the middle school sites. Also, each municipality will have different requirements due to changes that we are proposing.

- Upcoming tariffs on products will likely impact overall pricing for new construction, as well as any renovation or addition work. This is currently creating a lot of uncertainty in the bid market.
- The district likely needs seven middle schools for another 40 years. It is relatively easy to get 20 more years out of the SMS building, but it could potentially be very involved and costly to obtain 20 to 40 more years out of the SMS facility.

Bruce Runyon (and his team from Fanning Howey) attended the meeting for a presentation identifying locations at each of the OLSD middle school sites that additional space could be potentially added onto each building. Mr. Runyon introduced his team members. With him were Mr. Todd Boyer (who will likely be working with OLSD when Mr. Runyon retires) and Ms. Macy Whittaker (who has been working on renderings and project work for OLSD projects).

Mr. Boyer shared site drawings for each of the OLSD middle school sites with members. Each of the drawings illustrated areas in which potential additions could be placed onto each facility. Most of the sites only allowed for small additions to be placed onto each of the buildings (due to powerlines, railroad tracks or other site restrictions). Most of the additions would be a tight fit and difficult for construction crews to implement. At most locations, additional infrastructure for parking and bus traffic is not possible. Such circumstances would result in costly additions that would not accommodate the additional traffic created by increased enrollment. Berlin Middle School does have a nice area at the rear of the building where a more sizable addition could be constructed.

The site drawing for Shanahan Middle School (SMS) illustrated two scenarios in which a new building could be constructed behind the existing Shanahan building. The floor plan/footprint for Berlin Middle School was used for this placement exercise. If a new building was orientated with an east/west facing, it is likely that any portion of the SMS building could remain if the district would choose to keep part of SMS.

If the new building were orientated with a north/south facing, some of the east end of the existing SMS building would need to be removed to accommodate space for the new building. Building placement/facing is especially important if the district wishes to keep any part of the original Shanahan building in use for students during the construction process.

The committee did not make a recommendation for or against larger middle schools. They did conclude that additions were not feasible at the existing OLSD middle schools. Therefore determining, that larger middle schools were not an option for our existing facilities.

A general discussion commenced as follows:

- Dr. Daberkow questioned if a larger footprint (than BLMS) should be used for a school planned behind SMS so that some of the extra gym and specialty spaces were incorporated (reflective of the SMS building itself). Mr. Runyon shared that there were other possibilities that could be applied to a building for this site, but for the purpose of initial site planning/fit they had not been explored yet.
- Dr. Daberkow would like to know what the community envisions for a possible new building at SMS. Many community members are very connected to the SMS facility. If there was something that could be added onto the new building to honor the history of

SMS or a piece of the existing SMS building that could be maintained that would also satisfy this historical nostalgia, he would like to investigate it.

- Lizett Schrieber expressed concern that adding onto the district's newer middle school buildings might turn them into "Franken-buildings". She explained that SMS has been added onto so many times that the additions are obvious and have moved away from the original character of the building. She would hesitate before subjecting the district's newer buildings to this same process.
- Ms. Schreiber also wondered if implementing modulars at the middle schools in lieu of constructing classrooms might reduce potential renovation costs.
- Kevin McCaughey suggested that 2nd floor additions scenarios (mezzanine areas) be looked at when considering added space onto existing middle school buildings.
- Mr. Runyon shared that much more research is needed to verify that the middle school buildings could be added onto (should the district have an interest in proceeding).
- Mr. Runyon also suggests stand-alone mechanical systems for any of the proposed additions so as not to impact on the existing mechanical systems of the buildings (which could become costly and complicated). The recent additions at the elementary schools were constructed with stand-alone mechanical systems.
- Mark Scott asked if any of the district's middle school buildings were non-sprinklered for fire protection? Mr. Gordon and Mr. Runyon advised that they all were fire-sprinklered (with the exception of SMS).
- Kevin McCaughey shared that a 50 percent pricing increase for the renovation calculations might be somewhat on the high side as a percentage. He did indicate that the cost per square foot appeared to be on target.
- Member Greg Rogers inquired as to the possibility of parking garages. Members discussed that this is a very costly solution. Decades ago, the cost was around $5000.00 per car.

After much discussion, all members in attendance discussed that they had little to no interest in adding onto the district's existing middle schools. Per the information provided by Mr. Gordon and Fanning Howey, they did not believe it to be cost effective solution. They also shared great concern regarding the unforeseen infrastructure issues, mechanical challenges and other variables (individual to each site), which did not make it an appealing solution overall to address the rising enrollment issues at the middle school level.

Frank Eisenhower would like to proceed with discussions in May that are more specific to Shanahan Middle School.

General Business

Mr. Gordon extended a huge "thank you" to Bruce Runyon for his years working with the district. The district's gratitude is immeasurable for his professional service and contributions to district building and improvement projects over many decades. Mr. Runyon is retiring soon, and his valued insight will be missed.

Prospective member Andrew Fouss attended the Facilities Committee meeting in March of 2025. His professional resume aligns with the charter of the Facilities Committee. He is interested in becoming a regular member of the committee.

Frank Eisenhower called for a motion to recommend to the Board of Education that Mr. Fouss be approved as a regular member of the Facilities Committee.

Greg Rogers moved, and Brian Eisinger seconded the motion. All were in support of the motion and none were opposed. Motion carried.

Influencers

Upcoming federal tariffs are anticipated to impact construction bids for projects. It is hard to know at this time how material costs will be impacted by this moving forward. Many of the business professionals in the room were urging their vendors to seek out suppliers buying materials from sources that would not be subjected to the tariffs.

Kevin McCaughey has a project that is out for bid on a municipal project in the area. He should have pricing back soon and can share his observations when the results are received.

Frank Eisenhower called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Brian Eisinger moved, and Greg Rogers seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The Facilities Committee meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

The next monthly meeting is tentatively scheduled for 5/7/2025.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Gordon