

Building Team Meeting #2 – Virtual Meetings

April 2, 2024 - Cassingham and Maryland

April 3, 2024 – Montrose and Middle School

April 4, 2024 – High School

To open the meeting, Dr. Harley Williams, Director of Facilities & Operations, presented information on the progress of the District Facilities Planning process and how the Building Team fits into the important work to be done.

First, he explained that the schools' Strategic Plan specifically called for the district to engage in facilities planning. He also pointed out that there are no preconceived notions of what should be done to any school in the district.

He then explained the three phases of the planning process – Assessments, Options, and Decisions – and shared how the district is working through its plan and informing the community of the work.

To begin the facilities-planning process, the district first developed guiding principles for the plan.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our Bexley School facilities will...

Support powerful learning experiences

- With a variety of intentional, multi-use, flexible and adaptable spaces
- Inspire curiosity, joy and connection
- Provide a variety of opportunities (curricular, extra curricular, community)

Our Bexley School facilities will...

Foster well-being and a sense of belonging

- Meet the needs of each learner
- Provide equitable, inclusive and accessible spaces
- Be safe and secure (physically / social emotional)

Our Bexley School facilities will...

Be designed for the future and be community responsive

- Be sustainable and resilient
- Be efficient, fiscally responsible and built to last

Dr. Williams also shared the results of focus groups conducted with high school and middle school students, who shared their interest in the types of spaces they want in future schools and also pointed out to building team members the types of skills and dispositions the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2023 states that people will need many years into the future.

He also shared that building team members during the meeting would be asked to answer the following "essential" questions:

1. In what ways are the facilities failing to meet the expectations and needs of all stakeholders now and in the future?

2. What facility changes need to occur to align with the district's educational mission?

3. What do you perceive as sacred as it pertains to buildings or the district's facilities?

Following Dr. Williams' opening presentation, architect Brent Wilcox from Moody and Nolan shared information on the physical assessments of the school, including physical systems, accessibility, restroom analysis, and more. (See meeting slides)

Architect Aimee Eckmann, from Perkins&Will, then shared the educational adequacy assessments of the school. This assessment considered daylighting, circulation, classroom size, classroom utilization and other information. (See meeting slides.)

To wrap up the assessment presentation, Mr. Turckes shared baseline cost information with building team members and informed them that the cost to make only the physical repairs of all Bexley school buildings would be more than \$146 million. That cost does not include updating the educational adequacy of the classrooms and buildings.

Following this introductory presentation, building team members worked in small groups to answer the essential Building Team questions using an online application called Miro.

After answering the questions individually, each building team member discussed their views with other members in small groups. After about 40 minutes, the small-group discussion was shared with the full group.

SUMMARY OF BUILDING TEAM RESPONSES TO ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. In what ways are the facilities failing to meet the expectations and needs of all stakeholders now and in the future?

Cassingham Team – No flexible or collaborative spaces for kids and staff; bathroom access; athletic facilities/storage issues on recess/playground; spaces need to be more equitably designed so everyone has access to same things; flexible furniture; need better traffic flow – spend a lot of time in transit; doesn't support flow of teaching and learning; don't support different-abled people; bathrooms not for students; need adult and student collaborative space; daylight; no space for meetings; flow of building is challenging (main entry down to Cassingham)

High School Team – Not enough parking; space is cramped; no space to collaborate or flexible space; also need space for teachers to be collaborative; more storage space for classrooms and athletics; tech is outdated; cafeteria used by all 3 schools; athletic facilities are below standard; no space for athletic training or storage; athletic facilities are shared in sloppy way across entities; ADA accessibility throughout is lacking; classroom size doesn't accommodate group work

Maryland Team – Accessibility is a big desire now and in future – overarching desire; technology – need to answer question of whether students should take home devices or should school provide storage to keep them; playground fence needs repair; main entry needs better visibility for security; classroom size; lack of collaboration spaces; small spaces – some too small; lack of flexible spaces; grade levels not contiguous, which can hinder collaboration; environmental concerns, such as air quality, flooding; shared spaces (gym/café) are not large enough; have lots of nice cabinets, but nowhere to store larger things; daylight; inaccessible bathrooms; outdoor safety concerns regarding fencing, with gaps in fences; technology is inadequate; not able to accommodate new technology easily; storage of technology; accessibility – need to ensure all students have same options; flooding can derail the day; lack of collaborative spaces

Middle School Team - Big theme is classroom sizes are too small; lack of collaboration space; group classes; daylight is an issue; career exploration issues in middle school that can transfer to high school; athletic facilities, including weight room, need to be studied; look at traffic patterns – relieve crowded halls; drop off is a nightmare; middle school lacks a physical identity

Montrose Team - Need more spaces for collaborations; gym needs more flexibility, with seating – used for a lot of after-school events; cafeteria space is tiny – frequent noise escalation; need more extensive ADA support; better cell/Wi-Fi coverage; ADA accessibility; easier student drop-off/pick up; school grounds need TLC; need to generally update and improve the building; large meeting space needed

2. What facility changes need to occur to align with the district's educational mission?

Cassingham Team – athletic facilities aren't adequate compared to other districts; technology access isn't consistent across building; need outdoor learning spaces; want elementary cafeteria

High School Team – Need additional space for collaboration; need to make sure spaces are flexible and can serve different purposes; need space for different size events and groups to move; need to plan for future tech and learning experiences; set up good foundation for future changes; good variety of space – spaces for students who need quiet and to focus; informal places to gather and interact; space for students to explore, build, be messy; celebrate different cultures; space for pop-up shops/incubators; spaces outside classroom

to provoke thinking and encourage interaction – build on student curiosity; art wing and theater need equal attention; natural light needed

Maryland Team – Need adaptable/collaborative spaces; need storage for everything; spaces for kids to work and go back to if they walk away; flexible furniture; bathrooms are small and not accessible for all students; better functioning cafeteria and flow/space; meeting spaces for family/teacher conferences, assessments, and for staff collaboration; larger, more equitable classrooms and common spaces; accessible spaces for everyone; air quality/environmental; spaces that allow for better tech integration; grade-level groupings with collaborative space for grade levels; more equity in classroom sizes and facilities that emphasize equity (one swing for children with accessibility issues); fence

Middle School Team – Need flexibility; right-sized classrooms; portions of building come down to make way for other space; athletics – could anything be relocated off campus to allow for additional learning space; secure entrance at each school; modernize technology; set up building for modern-day learning; daylight; don't have enough classrooms for all teachers and staff; need community community spaces and shared spaces; bathrooms shared with older and younger students; need to modernize science labs by incorporating more maker space; kids need to create in multiple facets

Montrose Team – Need flexibility; need maker spaces; need better circulation, especially stairs; as a top district, need to stay on top of technology and innovation; secure entries and vestibules; more light/brightness; visually pleasing while honoring history at same time; STEM or project-based learning spaces

3. What do you perceive as sacred as it pertains to buildings or the district's facilities?

Cassingham Team – Memorial items (trees, benches, bricks, Molly's Garden, theater; traditional look is important in façade – clock tower; feel sense of community – want school buildings to reflect that; keep neighborhood schools – don't move grades to other buildings

High School Team – Buildings are hubs of community; high quality façade that reflects community history; neighborhood schools; memorial items (bricks, garden, etc.); ways to preserve things that feel like Bexley; keep what can be preserved or makes sense to be preserved from financial or aesthetic standpoint

Maryland Team – The feel/vibe (homey/cozy), not necessarily structure; historical feel; memorial items throughout school and property; want to be able to hang up student work throughout the building – just have it not be a challenge; small community feel; having restrooms in classrooms is huge – keep bathrooms in classrooms; keep neighborhood school; gym is the heartbeat of building; gym floor is beautiful wood floor with picture of mallard; high ceilings are nice; think about function and not just keeping historical feel; historical building – Ohio limestone is part of structure and fossils engrained in building structure; only community building in north Bexley – Maryland is the space for north neighborhood for families to come together

Middle School Team - Sustainability – need to reuse what we can; centralized location; maintaining neighborhood schools; continuing ability of families to utilize schools; keep character intact throughout modernization; maintain at least a portion of facades; historic community is important – design to meet aesthetic of neighborhood; walkable; above all else, meet needs of kids – might be time to “be bold” to break out of that

Montrose Team - Main entrance columns and steps; Main Street entrance worked well when it was not an elementary school; add more space without modifying the front; neighborhood schools; walkable/bikeable schools in neighborhoods

Other issues?

Cassingham Team – Keep focus open to all options, don’t be closed minded; there are some things that are loved and beneficial about being connected to middle school and high school, so keeping relationship and connection is important, but being on top of each other isn’t working; building is sterile, not child-like

High School Team – Think outside the box regarding spaces; consider partnerships (CSG or Capital); think of playground space as a learning space; need more outdoor learning spaces to move, connect, experiment, explore; walking paths; consider athletic spaces as part of facility plan; can a building be purchased from Capital to move middle school to allow for expansion of Cassingham and high school?; Move Bexley Education Foundation and administration to “prison yard” space to free up for additional classrooms; would be great to see interior courtyard spaces that are secured; need opportunities for service and mentoring

Maryland Team – Maryland teachers hanging items/anchor charts on classrooms walls can be a struggle – want students to understand what it means to present their work; school has a lot of dark wood, and dark green tiles make it dark – like to use student artwork to make it brighter; do all bathrooms have to stay in classrooms or only for kindergartens? Current bathrooms take up valuable space for classrooms or storage; space for orchestra and band is needed; office area for security – don’t want people walking in to where students are working; there are choke points during large gatherings

Middle School Team – Can we consider other sites? Partnerships should continue to happen to utilize space; looking “up” to build higher; complex doesn’t need to be one giant building – can be multiple buildings; don’t take up space with parking; middle school doesn’t have a sacred vibe like Cassingham and high school; when going to other school districts for activities, parents see other districts have nicer facilities than Bexley outdoor space between Cassingham and high school – called the “prison Yard” – doesn’t get used for anything – it’s good real estate; equitable environment for everyone involved

Montrose Team – what to do with one preschool classroom at Montrose; Terry Black Learning Center needs to be reutilized or maintained