

RE: NOTES FROM FIELD TRIPS JULY 25, 2023

Brentwood Borough School District organized site visits to Ehrman Crest Elementary/Middle School and Frick Environmental Center to see how these facilities were designed to support the educational goals of the organizations. The following are observations and recommendations based on what we saw and discussed with our hosts.

Ehrman Crest Observations (Take-Aways):

- Maximize flexibility of furniture and fixtures is working well for the school.
  - Key is staff had a lot of say in selection of furniture.
  - [Meteor](#) was the furniture vendor.
  - Design of hallways key – maintenance, function, aesthetics all can work together.
  - Lots of multi-functional storage
  - White boards on classroom wardrobe doors.
  - Magnetic peg boards everywhere.
  - Portable desk drawers can be placed at any workstation
- Natural light throughout the building creates sense of well-being that supports the learning.
- Site lines allow for maximum visibility from classroom to hallways to common areas. Enhances sense of security and helps teachers manage classrooms, collaborate with
- Having common/shared spaces has fostered sense of community and collaboration.
  - Gym and cafeteria space can be places for collaborative learning.
  - Students can drive informal out of classroom learning.
  - Design of stairwell is unique opportunity for special learning opportunities.
  - Bring sensory and tactile experiences to the hallways.
- Used design of finishes as learning tools
  - Floor tiles are measurable.
  - Color pallet inspired by nature. Mimic sky, trees, sunset/sunrise colors
  - Light fixtures relate to educational goals of each grade level.
- CIRC center is multi-functional open STEM lab, library resource center with natural light.
  - Seriously consider moving Art Room to first floor with Media Center, adjacent to Courtyard. Better learning connections between media center and art. Opportunities to extend art and maker activities outside (this is a very common extension, as opposed to digital and media activities that don't need natural light or outside space).
  - Move computer lab to lower level adjacent to music – better learning connections between music/computer science.
  - STEAM and computer not the same use – FFE not the same.
- Signage throughout for wayfinding and educational purposes

- Roof tops used for learning areas
  - play space in kindergarten isn't well utilized – too hot and windy.
  - Rethink courtyard as outdoor play area.
  - Roof top area with solar panels and raised planter beds is well utilized.
  - Rethink rooftop area as environmental learning area – solar, wind energy, ecology, plants
- Sinks
  - Project sinks need to be 9" deep
  - Trough sinks work very well
  - Shared sinks in commons areas work very well

#### Frick Environmental Center

- Natural light through windows connects with nature
  - Overhead lights are low, natural, not turned on when space can be daylight
  - Dimmable lights for classrooms
- Finishes and materials are natural (wood) or designed to mimic nature
  - Has a calming effect
  - More sustainable because won't feel dated
  - Tactile surfaces can support SEL and sensory activities
- Outdoor paved areas used for water collection
  - Rain chains
  - Are intentionally designed to integrate with natural environment.
- Outdoor raised beds used for educational programs.
  - Can change content based on learning goals.
  - Relatively easy to maintain in built space.
  - Beds can be built at various heights for accessibility.
- Signage inside and outside used for wayfinding and educational purposes.
- Flexible furnishing in classrooms and common areas.
- Outdoor classroom is shaded.
  - Need shade structure for courtyard.