



Bettendorf Community School District
Elementary Community Engagement Meetings
Questions & Comments

January 12 – January 21

Thomas Jefferson Elementary

January 12, 2016

123 attendees – 103 participants | 20 administrators & community advisory committee members

Questions

Has the district visited any buildings in the area to get an idea of where to head? (21st century ready) The Bettendorf school district elementary principals and administration went through a process of defining their expectations of 21st century elementary schools. In addition, administrators have visited the new Hamilton Elementary School in Moline, a recently completed 21st century school in the Quad Cities with flexible and open spaces.

Dubbed the “Classroom of the Future”, the IASB selected BLDD to construct this display and present an educational session on 21st Century facility design because of their leadership in the development of 21st century school facilities. Other local examples of 21st Century facilities can also be seen at Mid-City High School in Davenport, Easton Valley Elementary in Miles, IA, and Northeast Junior High in Silvis Illinois.

Define safe and secure? Our goal would be to create entries that would allow elementary offices to be more connected with the front door to provide more secure entrances.

What about open enrollment? We are planning for appropriate elementary space to accommodate our current and future enrollment which includes open enrollment. Currently the district has 246 students open enrolling into our elementary schools. Open enrollment has tended to keep district enrollment stable. An increase in open enrollment has helped the district fill seats of a decreasing resident enrollment. The district is afforded the ability to do more with our programming because of the open enrollment and the funds that follow those students.

How will open enrollment effect projections? The trend lines of open enrollment and resident enrollment are both being taken into account in the elementary facilities project.

How is it viable to keep Jefferson a one section school? The Elementary Facilities Planning Advisory Committee will be considering the viability of a one-section school within their work.

Why not make Thomas Jefferson a two section school and readjust boundaries to even out the enrollment? Making Thomas Jefferson a two-section school is among the scenarios being explored.

Much of Grant Wood attendance is from north of 53rd – any consideration to adjusting that “home school”? Of the 362 students who currently attend Grant Wood, 88 students or 24.3% come from north of 53rd Street.

Why are more sections at a single building better? By having more than one class per grade there is a greater social opportunity for students, more flexibility with student placements, an opportunity for teachers to collaborate with their grade level peers and the ability to have more staff who are closer to full time in the building (ie PE, art and music teachers, counselors, administrators).

How are 21st Century Learning Spaces defined, what are the specifics? 21st Century spaces are spaces that support active, student centered learning. They are characterized by flexible spaces with technology access. 21st Century spaces promote collaboration through a wide variety and size of spaces. Spaces for a teacher to meet with 6 students are just as important as a space for multiple classes (50-75) to gather to see a presentation or demonstration. This usually means more spaces of smaller capacity and more spaces of larger capacity, than most buildings offer with traditional classrooms. Typical examples of 21st Century spaces include flex spaces (spaces that can be converted to another learning setting), collaboration spaces, break-out/conference/huddle spaces, project spaces, presentation spaces (for small groups), lab spaces, “Makerspaces”, media development/production spaces, and planning spaces.

How do you deal with vehicle traffic before/after school when you add 100-150 plus more students with the addition of more buses and cars? Any project which would add to the size or capacity of the building would have to address the site constraints unique to each building including busing, parking and traffic needs. The Elementary Facilities Advisory Committee will work to understand the opportunities and challenges at each building as they make their recommendation.

What about increased costs of busing, when considering the costs of closing schools? If the district closes a school, elementary boundaries will need to be reconfigured. That work will be flushed out if a school closure is determined to be a potential final recommendation. **District Note:** Iowa code prohibits students from being on a school bus route for more than one hour (per bus).

In the cost-benefit analysis, how is the diminishing effect on the neighborhood property values considered? And then property taxes will go down – that should be considered too. We don't have comparative data or research that would support that property values or taxes would go down.

In your cost/benefit analysis, what factors were factored to account for “emotional” cost and costs to community? The process of community engagement is the best way to understand the emotional cost and costs to community. These costs are impossible to quantify, as such, they cannot be put into any equation reflecting a cost benefit ratio. This process has been developed to obtain input that is better obtained qualitatively. The work activities and related questions are the best opportunity for citizens to weigh in on the emotional costs and costs to the community.

How many children per room? At this time we plan to follow the board policy.

Kindergarten - 2 nd Grade	Class size limit 25 (1 over without para support, 2 over with para support)
3 rd - 5 th Grades	Class size limit 27 (1 over without para support, 2 over with para support)

How long will the changes take place? The length would depend upon which scenario is selected and the number of schools that are impacted. We are estimating approximately 18 months per facility for structural changes.

If additions/renovations are to occur at multiple buildings, what would the timeframe be to do so – 2 yrs, 3 yrs, etc. How would this affect building costs? Once any scenario is selected to be implemented, the first projects of the plan would be 18-24 months away from any student occupying any new or renovated space. Construction inflation is generally anywhere from 2%-4% per year, but phasing of the projects is an additional discussion at the Board of Education Level, therefore all project costs are represented in current construction costs. As the plan and phasing begin to take shape, escalated costs will be incorporated at that time.

Comments

- (I have) concerns about comparison to a year round school. **District Note: The comparison is being made regarding our newest facilities (2008) design for 21st century learning vs our facilities that were built in 1950's through 1985. (BLDD).**
- Jefferson and its neighborhood have a long history of good education and exceptional volunteering and parent support. Larger schools only save money (BLDD reiterate optimal school) – don't improve educational outcomes. TJ has a homelike atmosphere! You aren't trying to quantify these important values. We don't want our kids to go to Twain – no real room for expansion on that hilly property.
- Wondering about the surrounding area of the schools – parking, traffic flow, play space. We would like to see the models with that information. **District Note: Models will be developed as the scenarios are narrowed.**
- About Jefferson, I have been a parent and staff member for 28 years at Jefferson. I live in the neighborhood. Please ask me any question.
- Please really consider making Jefferson a two section school. We have children in the neighborhood who cannot get into Jefferson. **District Note: This year 9 TJ students have been administratively transferred due to limited space in some grade-level classrooms or program ie. special education.**
- Two sections would have many benefits. Make two parallel buildings with a courtyard in between them. Science area!

- Thomas Jefferson is a unique school and neighborhood with a rich history of neighborhood support and academic achievement, in at least three generations of students.

Herbert Hoover Elementary

January 13, 2016

32 attendees – 18 participants | 14 administrators & community advisory committee members

Questions

In the original options, there were plans that included new buildings at several sites. These plans don't show those. Have they been taken off the table? If you're going to close a building shouldn't you build a new one somewhere to make the transition easier to swallow? New school options were reduced because they demonstrated the least cost benefit ratio due to the good condition of our current facilities.

What were you looking for (indicators) in a building to be 21st Century Ready prior to today's work? The Council of Educational Facility Planners International's Guide for School Facility Appraisal provides the framework for the educational adequacy rating. This rating system goes beyond keeping the student safe, warm, and dry (although those specific items are covered by multiple questions) – and asks questions related to ability to perform different instructional methods, adequate amenities for special programs (art, music, etc).

Comments

- We are very concerned about class size and how it affects student achievement. Classes are too large now. If we have reduced class size and increased time for specials teacher – this increases collaboration time for core teachers.
- I felt that we were asked to rank the scenarios with only information about cost, size, sq. footage and number of students or sections per building. I would like to see other information considered such as location of buildings, neighborhoods, make-up of community. **District Note - The Elementary Facilities Advisory Committee will make every attempt to provide information pertinent to the scenarios to help in evaluating the scenarios. Any requests for additional information should be directed to the school district through Celeste at (563) 359-3681, ext. 3005 or cmiller@bettendorf.k12.ia.us**

Grant Wood Elementary

January 14, 2016

87 attendees – 68 participants | 19 administrators & community advisory committee members

Questions

You mentioned all the “changes in enrollment” that are happening – however only spoke to 1 – the floodplain. What are all the changes? Based on an enrollment projection analysis as well as past trends, we are projected to lose 35 students each year for the next 4 years.

Regarding the flood insurance, can the school board pressure the city council to building flood protection along Duck Creek/Greenway Creek? The city has consulted with FEMA and is looking at various options for assisting the residents of the floodplain.

What is the timeline for starting and ending construction? The Bettendorf Board of Education has to accept the report of recommendations by the Elementary Facilities Advisory Committee. The first projects to be completed from the master plan will be 18-24 months from the date the project is given the green light. The master plan is to be completed by the summer of 2016. The Board of Education has not had the opportunity to discuss implementation at this time. It is too soon at this time to give specific dates for implementation.

How are we going to address the discrepancy in class sizes if sections remain the same? For the most part the district is near or at maximum class sizes which is fiscally optimal. In general, class sizes are within 1 or 2 students on either side of the class size guidelines. A special effort is made to allow students to attend their neighborhood school whenever possible which may create a discrepancy in class sizes among elementary schools

The Bettendorf Community School District, whenever possible, will attempt to keep kindergarten, first, and second grade classes at 25 or below, and third through fifth grade classes at 27 or below.

How do these changes affect class size? Our initial scenarios have been developed for our current number of elementary classrooms. Based on an enrollment projection analysis as well as past trends we are projected to lose 35 students each year for the next 4 years. Although we did experience an increase in students this year, it's too early to plan to maintain our current elementary enrollment moving forward based on enrollment project work.

Comments

- With the floodplain issue considerations (where families will go) about the enrollment at a given school (GW), the Jefferson neighborhood homes will potentially become the choice for many of these families considering cost of a home, supporting the continued existence of that school.

Paul Norton Elementary

January 19, 2016

54 attendees – 37 participants | 17 administrators & community advisory committee members

Questions

What are the equity upgrades that have been identified at PN? The equity upgrades that have been identified at Paul Norton include increased physical education space, an expanded commons, and administrative offices. The upgrades would also include 21st Century spaces like breakout/small group rooms, large group room, hands-on/project based learning/maker space, and a messy/lab space.

Mark Twain Elementary

January 20, 2016

34 attendees – 21 participants | 13 administrators & community advisory committee members

No Questions

Neil Armstrong Elementary

January 21, 2016

29 attendees – 10 participants | 19 administrators, community advisory committee members & others

Questions

How does the floodplain affect the building? Although a very small portion of Grant Wood Elementary's lower field (at the bottom of the hill) is in the floodplain, the school and playground are not within the floodplain zone.