

# APPLETON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

## FUTURE NEEDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (Tuesday, November 12, 2019)

Generated by Kimm Smith on Wednesday, November 20, 2019

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**1. MEETING OPENING** (Although a quorum of Board of Education members may be present, no Board Resolutions will be approved.)

### A. Welcome and Review of Previous Meetings

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**2. DISTRICT FINANCE**

#### A. Presentation on District Finances by Mike Clark, Baird

Michael Clark, Director of Public Finance at Baird for the past 20 years, was present to talk about the District's finances. Mike was the AASD Business Manager from 1994 to 2000 and was involved in the District's 1998 Referendum.

- Review of historic mill rate/tax rate
  - \* Current year tax rate = \$8.32
  - \* Rate has been going down since 2015 - from \$9.60
  - \* It has been below State average
- District existing debt
  - \* AASD has received the Aa1 Moody's Bond Rating, which is excellent
  - \* 2 types of debt -- Fund 39 voter approved (referendum) and Fund 38 within existing revenue limit (payments made within District resources)
  - \* District has been using Debt Defeasance -- prefunding of existing Fund 39 debt to manage tax rate and provide savings to the District
    - \* Defeasement is a shortening up of referendum debt
    - \* Defeas additional debt - we just did this and saved taxpayers \$3 million
    - \* Interest rates are low - historically rates have been low
    - \* We do not include rates in the referendum as they could change
    - \* District distributes on an equalized basis -- gives to municipalities and they distribute on an assessed basis
    - \* 2 types of growth -- property value and new valuation growth -- property values are up and we have some new growth, which means more tax base to help support existing and new referendum support
- Hypothetical Referendum Costs of a \$80 million debt referendum and \$1 million operating referendum would keep the debt portion of the tax rate at 92 cents (this is just one option/example -- could be multiple options)
  - \* Voter approved levy -- would keep the current debt effort on the taxpayer at the same level - 92 cents
- Referenda Legislative Update
  - \* No more than 2 referendum questions in a calendar year (example 2 operating; 2 debt; or 1 of each)
  - \* 2 ballot questions can only be held on the regularly-scheduled spring or fall election days
- Referendum Election in February or April (April will be a bigger turnout as there will be a Presidential Primary)
  - \* Deadline for a Spring election is January 28, 2020 (Resolution would need to be adopted and filed by this date)
  - \* It has been a good climate the last 3 years for referendums
  - \* Operating is typically on a recurring basis, but can be nonrecurring as well. Recurring is traditionally used, which gets added to the revenue limit from this point forward.
    - \* Recurring money is there forever
    - \* Nonrecurring amount is not added to base (example...\$1 million could be set for 1 year or 5 years, whatever we determine in the Resolution/Question)

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**3. CURRENT DISTRICT NEEDS**

#### A. Review of AASD Needs

Greg recapped our last meeting.

- Discussion about 2005 and 2014 referendum and what we spent those dollars on
- Discussion on previous AASD capital projects from the last 6 years
- We heard from 3 elementary principals, who represented our 16 elementary schools, about their needs.
  - \* Classroom spaces
  - \* Specialist spaces are overcrowded and/or not conducive to learning (fine arts, special ed., EL, intervention, Talented and Gifted, tutoring, etc.)
  - \* Spaces are not available for innovative practices (STEAM Centers to apply what they are learning, which can't happen sitting at a desk -- adaptable, flexible, and mobile)
- We heard from 1 middle school principal, Al Brant from Kaleidoscope, who represented our 4 middle schools, about their needs.
  - \* Instructional spaces
  - \* Specialist spaces (special ed., EL, intervention, staff collaboration space, meeting rooms for services and visiting providers, etc.)
  - \* Full-time instructional coaches and grade 6-8 concept

- \* Spaces are not available for innovative instructional spaces: STEAM
- We heard from Thai Xiong, Director of STEM, on the importance of STEM at all grade levels. It is important to have a space that enables students to explore science, technology, engineering, art, math, or any other content area while creating experiments and projects that foster creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication.
- \* He shared pictures of innovative spaces/furniture and talked about their visit to Brillion Elementary. He and others toured Brillion's STEM and innovative spaces. This is a great space featuring the following: movable seating and tables with large working spaces; accessible and adaptable spaces; visual displays on wall surfaces for distributed interactivity; writable wall surfaces; mobile whiteboards; access to power through drop-down power outlets; Wi-fi technology and wired connectivity.
- Sean Schuff, technology education teacher at TESLA Engineering School and committee member was asked earlier this week "What will students be doing in this space?"
- \* Students will engage in the thoughtful application of theories and practices related to science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and other content areas to develop and create solutions that solve real world problems.
- We heard from the 3 high school principals about their needs. They have some common needs.
  - \* Learning Spaces - Academic (access to large flexible spaces)
  - \* Curricular/Co-curricular (functional spaces to be utilized before, during, and after school)
- Portrait of a Graduate was discussed -- what do we want our students to leave with after they graduate? Here are top 4 attributes are community selected.
  - \* Critical thinking and Problem Solving
  - \* Communication
  - \* Productivity and Accountability
  - \* Initiative and Self Direction
- A lot of these cannot occur when a student is sitting in a desk; needs to also happen in co-curriculars

The top 2 specific needs at each of our three high schools were discussed this evening.

#### **- East High School**

- #1 Add instructional spaces that can easily be modified to meet the instructional design of each lesson
- #2 Fitness Center expansion (used from 6AM to 7PM; used for physical education classes, athletic teams, general student population, weekends, summer, year round)

#### **- West High School**

- #1 Add an atrium to congested area where several additions converge. There are 3 additions and no open area where these spaces meet - no large gathering area. Needed for the following reasons:
  - \* Creates an interior common space in a more visible area of building
  - \* Provides a concession stand in a location that can be used for both inside and outside events
  - \* Relieves major congestion where three building additions converge
  - \* Becomes the meeting spot for all PE classes heading outdoors for classes
  - \* Upper level loft provides space for classes, team meetings, other community spaces closer to a parking lot
  - \* Creates a safe space for students waiting for rides.
  - \* Allows for repurposing the existing indoor concession stand back into a storage area for PE and athletics
- #2 Construction of a building on unutilized space behind the school
  - \* A multipurpose space out back where dome used to be
  - \* Augment Fitness Center (current one is on the 2nd floor and therefore, unable to be expanded)
  - \* Use as an additional space for students to recreate or use as class space during the day
  - \* 40 x 40 yards of turf field, used for PE classrooms -- especially useful for Adaptive PE, indoor recreation, and space for lunch hours
    - \* Space for wrestling practice, football, soccer, baseball, softball, some storage, another space for any sport season (currently have gyms occupied 3:45-10 PM daily in season)

#### **- North High School**

- #1 Focus on curricular/co-curricular spaces -- Fitness Center & Tennis Courts

### **B. Presentations on Current Needs and Solutions (Special Ed., School Climate, English Learners, Fine Arts)**

**SPECIAL EDUCATION & SCHOOL CLIMATE** presented by Melissa Toshner (Assoc. Dir. Special Ed.) and Sheree Garvey (Coor. of School Climate)

- Melissa talked about it from the lens of students with disabilities and Sheree talked about it from the lens mental health needs our students have
- Concerns -- Privacy, confidentiality and equity
- Concerns -- Space concern to meet the unique needs of students

#### Space concerns

- 2,684 students in the AASD receiving special education services
- Example -- Highlands created a great new space for students with special needs (due to relocating the front entrance). It's a great space, but as you can see from the picture - 8 kids with several staff and equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, etc.) take up a lot of space and they are already at capacity.
- Need to meet the kids' needs that are outlined in their IEPs

### 2019-20 Programs

- Not every school offers every special education program
- Sometimes kids can't go to neighborhood school because they do not have a program there to meet their needs
- Speech/Language and LD (learning disability) are offered in all of our schools
- EBD (emotional behavior disability), SEBD (severe EBD), autism, ID (intellectual disability), not serviced at all schools - creates an equity issue - they cannot follow their peers
- Schools are making creative use of space (example Madison converted a locker room, so that more kids can stay in their neighborhood school and follow their peers)
- Most buildings don't have any available space
- Important that we meet the sensory needs of students with disabilities (help students regulate, deal with emotions, etc.). Some students need more space to regulate when they are struggling and going through trauma, anxiety, etc. This is not just for students with disabilities -- all kids.
- Students with mental health needs could disrupt the classroom if they are not regulated.

### Space Concerns to meet the unique needs of students

- Intentional about what social emotional learning (SEL) looks like for our students and small group instruction to address academic needs and social and emotional needs
- District-wide mental health screenings at grades 3, 9, and 11 in collaboration with Samaritan Health and School Based Mental Health through United Way's PATH (Providing Access to Healing) program. They are coming in to provide services to our students. PATH is in all high schools, all middle schools, and 2 of our elementary schools.
- We added at-risk staff at the middle schools and increased the FTE at high schools (space needed to meet those needs)
- Community partners (Boys & Girls Club 's TRAC-Truancy Reduction & Assessment Center) and other support staff from the community need space as well. TRAC helps provide services for students with attendance concerns.
- Current space and layout and age of some of our buildings is not always possible to accommodate our needs.
- All of these staff members who support the unique needs of our students to address behavior, academic, social and emotional needs often share the same space to support students.
- Over the last 10 years we have been utilizing spaces such as vaults and closets. Those staff members need to be in spaces near each other to respond to the unique needs our students related to mental health, overall health needs, and SEL. - Our spaces are not equipped to add more offices. This results in several different scenarios related to privacy and confidentiality.

### Kaleidoscope has a self-regulation room called "The Nest"

- We think about our spaces in a different way -- to create that space for students to self regulate -- get them back to class and regular environment
- Some schools can and some cannot have these spaces because of age of building and space in building

### Confidentiality and Space Concerns

- Example: Student experiences some difficulty during the day with some social and emotional concerns and seeks out assistance from a student services staff member. But she finds that the student services staff member is sharing an office with potentially 2 other staff members, so the student/staff member has to seek out a different area to meet, potentially making the student even more emotionally irregulated.
- Example: PATH Counselor and or TRAC community partner arrives in the building to support students and has to find a room or space to work with students. This room is not always consistent and makes it difficult to create a warm, welcoming space for students to receive support. And due to privacy concerns they have limited space.
- We need to be conscientious of privacy with students

### **ENGLISH LEARNERS** presented by Amy Swick, Coordinator of English Learners (EL) & Bilingual Programs

#### Meeting the needs

- Steady increase in EL enrollment
  - \* 2016-17 school year: 1,326 EL students
  - \* 2017-18 school year: 1,404 EL students
  - \* 2018-19 school year: 1,512 EL students
  - \* 2019-20 school year: 1,503 EL students
- EL program and supports in ALL schools
  - \* No elementary programs at Berry, Houdini, Huntley, and Richmond
  - \* No middle school program at Einstein
- Staff to Student Ratios
  - \* Reduce EL class sizes and expand student supports using the ideal ratio of 20:1 (currently 40:1)

#### Supporting Newcomers and Students with Refugee Backgrounds

- Increase Newcomer program supports through cluster sites at elementary
  - \* Elementary program located at McKinley
  - \* Middle School program located at Kaleidoscope
  - \* High School program located at North
- Steady Newcomer student enrollment
  - \* 2016-17 school year: 84 Newcomer students
  - \* 2017-18 school year: 83 Newcomer students
  - \* 2018-19 school year: 67 Newcomer students

- \* 2019-20 school year: 84 Newcomer students
- Staff to Student Ratios
  - \* Reduce Newcomer class sizes and expand Newcomer supports using the ideal ratio of 10:1 (currently 20:1 as it requires more intense support)
- Both Newcomer and EL programs are still growing - steady enrollment
- Families may refuse EL services or receive transportation to other school within the District that offer EL programs
- There would be less of an impact in transportation costs if we had it in all buildings
- Programs help students to build on academic and social language in English
- Students receive transportation from all over the District and so do not get the opportunities they need to make home school connections

**FINE ARTS** presentation by Renee Ulman, Coordinator of Fine Arts

- Fine Arts includes K-12 art, music, dance, and theatre
- We have amazing things happening in our District in fine arts
- General Music (K-6) three major components to curriculum (singing, movement, and playing instruments)
  - \* 60 minutes of instruction each week
  - \* Space for movement is a big need
  - \* Shared instructional space and enough space is another issue
  - \* Example: In larger schools like Huntley space is shared -- music rooms on stage; not enough time in the day to get all scheduled
- Theatre -- Co-curricular, musicals, plays
  - \* Sound, lighting, space needs for both performing and building of sets
  - \* Productions at East, North, West -- technology and equity issues -- spaces out of date
  - \* North needs a new orchestra pit and fly system
  - \* North has no workshop to build sets either - building on the stage -- puts strain on curtains and wear and tear on floors, etc.
    - \* West -- our biggest auditorium -- good for theatre, but music is not good in that location; boxed in; sound poor
    - \* Technology needs to be upgraded at all 3 high schools
- Band/Strings
  - \* Band is in grades 5-6 at the elementary level
  - \* Strings is in grades 4-6 at the elementary level
  - \* Every year our numbers increase -- need space for small and large group lessons
  - \* We have instruments and resources to get kids the instruments if they need them -- need storage for instruments

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**4. SIXTH GRADE**

**A. Presentation on 6th grade**

Al Brant, Principal of Kaleidoscope, and Committee member, talked about having grades 6-8 in one building.

- Research suggests a 3 or 4 grade configuration is best for transitioning students from elementary school to high school
- Kaleidoscope (a charter school) has had grades 6-8 since it opened 12 years ago
- Much easier to build relationships with kids and families when you have them for 3 years
- 8th graders step up to be leaders
- 6th grade is a transition year; 7th grade students settled in; 8th grade lead and prepare for high school
- Staff were asked if they see a difference and they indicated the following:
  - \* students mature faster
  - \* students have more variety in teachers and spaces at middle school
  - \* dedicated instructional spaces for music, art, phy. ed., technology, engineering, family & consumer ed., sciences, etc.
  - \* access to digital resources -- students in middle school (and KA) work with one-to-one devices (Chromebooks) and are ready to be engaged with these resources
- Al shared a short video of some of his students talking about why having 6th grade in a middle school is so important. Responses pertaining to social/emotional pieces (friends) were common among the students.

Deb Moreland, Principal at Magellan (located at Wilson), talked about moving their 6th graders from Highlands to Magellan (this school year).

- We see 6th graders as kids that need to spread their wings socially and emotionally; they are ready to grow and meet the challenges -- greater independence
- They get additional opportunities (which they love such as advanced math classes and other co-curriculars)
- A parent survey before transitioning 6th grade students to middle school indicated concerns before the move (all parents had some kind of concern)
- Following the move of 6th to middle school a parent survey indicated that 30% of parents had no concerns; 20% still had some concerns, and 0% were very concerned
- Parents made the following comments (96% filled out the survey):
  - \* "Have a year up on other kids their age on preparing for middle school and beyond."
  - \* "Greater independence."
- A student survey before the move indicated that about 57% of the students had concerns.
- After the move, a survey indicated that no student said they would rather be in elementary school with 83% of them indicating that they like/love middle school.

- Students made the following comments:
  - \* "There is definitely more freedom in middle school, and the teachers treat you like the older kids we are. You have the opportunity to be more independent as well and I think that's a nice change."
  - \* "It's been wonderful! I like being trusted not having to walk in a line."

Challenges they have run into adding 6th graders to Magellan/Wilson:

- Gym space (Fix: teachers have been very flexible and are making it work)
- Lunchroom schedule/space (Fix: Magellan teachers do lunch supervision in their classrooms and then kids can go outside following lunch)
- Curriculum needs (Fix):
  - \* Academic and Career Planning (ACP) and Health are integrated into all curriculum areas for 6th grade elementary.
  - \* In middle school there is a focus on ACP for one quarter of research and exploration and Health is studied in Family and Consumer Science.

K-6 Curriculum and Instruction Challenges presentation by Steve Harrison, Asst. Superintendent of Assessment, Curriculum and Instruction

- K-6 Curriculum Design Challenges (Math and Science)
  - \* Math Domains and Next Generation Science Standards are not in K-6 grade domains/bands
  - \* There is a natural divide in math between 5th and 6th (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12)
  - \* Elementary has 40 minutes a day of inquiry (science and social studies alternating)
  - \* Middle school has 50-60 minutes a day or blocks (science)
- K-6 Instructional Materials Challenges (Math Expressions books)
  - \* Majority of publishers produce K-5 and 6-8 products
  - \* Limits options when adopting new materials
  - \* Add-on products may lack rigor needed for 6th grade
  - \* There is a difference in rigor and depth of knowledge in a 6-8 math book vs K-6 product
- Science materials are also packaged within grade domains/bands (6-8 and 9-12)
  - \* Both based on a K-5 model (not designed for K-6)
  - \* Grades 6-8 offers more science instruction because of the schedule (example 50-60 minute block)
  - \* Most publishers produce materials as a K-5
- Math Acceleration Challenges
  - \* Traditional math path -- 5th and 6th grade at elementary level & 7th and 8th grade at middle level - our options are limited if the pathway doesn't fit them
  - \* At the end of 5th grade, teachers have kids enter accelerated 6th grade math and they need to go off site to take those classes -- then take 8th algebra their 7th grade year
  - \* For those accelerated in math -- traditionally they would go from 6th grade math to accelerated middle school math and then accelerated middle school algebra
  - \* For schools with 6-8 model -- accelerated students can take Accelerated Math 7/8 (in 6th grade); then Accelerated Algebra (in 7th grade); then Geometry (in 8th grade)
  - \* Example: Kaleidoscope's 6th grade accelerated pathway -- pace makes a difference -- content at a higher level -- at KA and Odyssey they can stay at school for accelerated math

Bill McClone, Principal at Lincoln Elementary School, presented on having 6th grade in an elementary school

- We love our 6th grade students, but they are ready for middle school.
  - \* 11 and 12 year olds have similar interests to middle school students
  - \* Co-curricular activities are more robust (now they have to travel to club activities off site)
  - \* Curriculum resources/materials fit better
  - \* Reading materials and interests fit better
  - \* 3-years in the middle level allow for better connections and stronger relationships
  - \* Creates much needed space in our elementary schools
  - \* 6th grade students that move in from other area districts (all have 6-8 middle schools) have a tough time being back at an elementary school -- walk in lines, no talking, etc.
  - \* Scheduling of band and strings is difficult as we are pulling kids from math, science, social studies, etc. to fit them in the music schedule. At middle school it's part of their normal day.
  - \* Elementary school assemblies - need to have incentives that fit both 6th graders and kindergarten students -- big difference in what they like
    - \* Social and emotional benefits
    - \* There are more electives offered at middle school
    - \* 12 YEAR OLDS DO NOT WANT TO WEAR COATS :)
    - \* Space problems in elementary school -- classrooms in basement below gym -- loud for those in those rooms -- band/strings in closet, on stage, in multipurpose room, depends on the day

## 5. CONVERSATION CAFE

### A. Table Discussions and Activity

Table groups were asked to list questions from now until the next meeting RE: 6th grade moving to middle school

Our next meeting will start with our Conversation Cafe as there was not enough time for it this evening.

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## **6. CLOSING**

### **A. Future Meetings**

Next meeting is Tuesday, November 26.

This meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.