Walla Walla Public Schools
364 South Park Street * Walla Walla WA 99362-3293 * (509) 527-3000 * FAX (509) 529-7713

A Summary Report on the Condition of the Two High Schools

The condition of the two high schools has been studied several times over the past three years. In 2004 the condition of every school building in Walla Walla was assessed as part of a facility master planning process. Since that time, there have been additional internal assessments, agency inspections, and patron reviews. For Walla Walla High School a recurring theme has been the contrast between the well-kept exterior of the buildings versus the aging systems inside. For Lincoln Alternative High School, there has been no such contrast. Both the exterior and interior reflect the age of the building.

Walla Walla High School has significant problems in two major areas: (1) the physical condition of many of the building systems, and (2) the educational suitability of many of the spaces. The major physical condition problems generally include: (a) lack of thermal qualities for walls, doors, windows and roof; (b) the HVAC systems are old inefficient and past their serviceable life; (c) there is no ventilation and the systems do not meet indoor air quality standards; (d) light fixtures are not energy efficient; (e) the wall and floor finishes are worn and contain asbestos suspected materials; (f) ceiling finishes are worn, marred and damaged; (g) there are no fire sprinklers; (h) many doors are worn, fail frequently, and operate with difficulty; (i) ADA standards are not met; and (j) the structure and other components likely do not meet current seismic code requirements. The most serious educational suitability problems include: traffic circulation, parking problems, undersized classrooms (especially science labs), a “disconnected” campus preventing adequate integration of programs and access to technology, undersized fine arts spaces, undersized performing arts spaces, “mis-sized” career technical education spaces (some too large, some too small), and poor storage. The support spaces (teacher work areas, offices, clinic, food service, counselling, and reception) for Walla Walla High School are generally undersized and difficult to access from some buildings.

Lincoln Alternative High School has even more problems, but they can also be categorized under “physical condition” and “educational suitability.” The major physical condition problems include: (a) the structure and other components likely do not meet current seismic code requirements; (b) there is some evidence of cracks in the foundation and floor; (c) there is a lack of thermal qualities for walls, doors, windows and roof; (d) the HVAC systems are old inefficient and past their serviceable life; (e) the plumbing fixtures and plumbing are old, outdated, failing, and need replacement; (f) there is no ventilation and the systems do not meet indoor air quality standards; (g) light fixtures are not energy efficient; (h) the wall and floor finishes are worn and contain asbestos suspected materials; (h) ceiling finishes are worn, marred and damaged; (i) there are no fire sprinklers; (j) many doors are worn, fail frequently, and operate with difficulty; (k) ADA standards are not met; (l) there are not appropriate fire walls to separate occupancies; (m) there are not enough exits in some areas meeting appropriate separation requirements; and (n) there is no elevator. The most serious educational suitability problems include: traffic circulation, parking problems, poor fencing, poor signage (although

some of this has being corrected recently), and poor storage throughout. Many of the special learning spaces (library, art room, science room, etc.) are simply general classrooms. These special learning spaces lack the utilities necessary for their programs. Like Walla Walla High School, the support spaces (teacher work areas, offices, clinic, food service, counselling, and reception) are generally undersized and difficult to access. The Lincoln Alternative High School facility was originally designed as an elementary school. Many of size and scale problems in this building can be trace back to this underlying factor.

The design capacity of Walla Walla High School is just over 1,400 students. It is presently housing approximately 1,850 students. Lincoln Alternative High school is at its capacity of approximately 200 students.

In summary, the Task Force finds the two high schools in need of renovation and perhaps replacement of some buildings. The needed renovation or replacement is in keeping with the age of the buildings and the different systems inside each building. Some additional space will need to be added to provide additional capacity. Updating the sizes and placement of many of the classrooms and support spaces will help keep Walla Walla Public Schools in a position to provide the quality secondary programs required for the future of our community.