



Walla Walla Public Schools - High School Facilities Task Force Minutes from 6.20.07

Members present: Scott Krivoshein, Lawson Knight, Mike Pettyjohn, Jody Schneidmiller, Jim Hayner, Cindy Widmer, Mindy Meyer, Rob Ahrens, John Butenhoff, Jim Sporleder, Dave Warkentin, Ruth Russo, Darcy Weisner, Ruth Ladderud, LaDessa Smelcer, Carina Stillman, Dick Cook, Max Carrera, Everett Knudson, Jim McCarthy, Linda Newcomb, and Cindy Meyer. Lynette Rowley attended in place of her husband John.

Members absent: Nanqi You, James Payne, Dick Cook, Jim Sanders and Clint Gabbard.

Guests: Maria Gonzales, Toni Rudnick, Mark Higgins, Rich Carter, Anne Golden, Dave Teater

Introductions/Charge for the Group

School Board President Anne Golden talked to the group about the bond issue that had been placed in front of the voters and failed. Afterwards, she said, "We conducted surveys, talked to people, and listened to what they were saying. As a result, we put Edison as a single issue on a bond – and it passed. Now, we need to focus on high school education." The charge for the Task Force is to study facilities issues that currently exist, research "what can be," and then try to discover how to determine if any changes in facilities are warranted for high schools in Walla Walla.

Table Discussions

Participants at each of five tables were asked to brainstorm the question: **What are the issues facing 9-12 education in Walla Walla?** Below are the results:

Bluebirds (Table 1)

- Build a 9th grade wing – pretty cramped
- New administration building – could make it into 9th wing and administration offices, then add other grade level wings
- Help with CP bond – impact on our high school
- Several bonds are needed
- Maintain and expand arts
- Don't simply focus on WASL – don't drop electives
- Opportunities for a wide range of student served
- Funding is dropped for good programs that work
- Smaller high school
- More electives
- Technology advances needed
- WASL curriculum is issue
- Highly capable teacher endorsements – strain on teaching staff
- Deficient in math area – need more classes, but not enough qualified teachers
- Vision of what students are prepared for when they leave our doors. Need to prepare all students.
- Connect kids more to trades – the majority are not going to 4 year schools
- What does a high school look like in the future?

Goldfinch (Table 2)

- Voter confidence in school district – failed bond and passed Edison bond by 1% - disengaged voters
- Strategic plan for academic excellence is not known generally by the voter

The Walla Walla Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with all requirements of the ADA.

- Quality of education?
- Graduation rates?
- Test scores (need direct correlation between these and the new facilities)
- Influence of facilities – research based?
- Class sizes, school sizes, school numbers?
- Safety was big part of the plan for the failed bond – read John Stossel who says schools really aren't that unsafe. Is the safety issue a myth?
- Facility deficiencies
- HVAC
- Outside passing between classes
- Science facilities
- Windows
- Technology and networking
- Classrooms
- Lunchroom (multiuse)
- Space constraints Why not remodel?
- Community outreach
- Community confidence in school – related decisions need rebuilt (that's what was on the paper)
- Academics – should money be spent on facilities when we could be spending money increasing graduation rates (i.e.: training, curriculum, after school program, counseling)
- Quality staff – professional development
- Resolve issues - second high school

Cardinals (Table 3)

- Regain credibility in the community so that we can pass a bond issues that allows for:
 - No portables
 - Appropriate class size (Commons, science, athletics, music, special needs)
 - Green construction - particularly in the science building
 - Paine as a separate issue
- When we build, do it right (gave example of auditorium)
- Improve parking and drop offs
- Safety and ADA issues
- Don't mix high school bond with other building issues – simplify bond issue – Safety and security
- How do we develop roots in the school system for newcomers?
- Where does the thinking about new schools come into play?
- Demonstrate need
- Attract good teachers
- Special needs issues/space
- Athletic facilities – upgrade
- Improved parking and drop-offs
- What role does a College Place high school play?
- Wide program offerings in music/arts
- Upgrade Paine – don't get issues confused
- Green construction particularly in sciences

Sparrows (Table 4)

- More student space, especially in classrooms
- Safety from without and within – knowing who is there
- Facilities – especially Paine, but for Wa-Hi, too – are they adequate? Appropriate?
- Is location correct?
- Availability of adequate classroom resources/materials
- Ninth grade “resources” – at least discuss placement of ninth graders. How do we connect them to big school
- Ask parents – a broad group and not just people who show up to PTA meetings
- Ask high school students – find a way to seek input from a diverse group of students
- Athletic and PE options
- Connections for all students – continuum – know every student has a place to land – right programs available

- Sustained ability to attract quality staff
- Excellent, timely professional development (esp. with change)
- Alternative programs – how designed
- Two high schools – topic needs to be addressed
- Fifth year seniors and failing students – dropouts: How do we intervene when shy of credits?
- The rub between preparing everyone for a four year college when not all are headed there (vocational education and connection with colleges, community)

Quail Group (Table 5)

- Meeting WASL regulations/No Child Left Behind – state and federal mandates to meet standards
- The mandate - mastery and proficiency
- Proximity – size
 - physical size of rooms to change styles
 - opportunity to group differently
 - distance between rooms
- Expanded opportunity – size of physical plant, size of student body
 - teacher/student/staff relationships
 - method of instruction
 - closeness to teachers also teacher same groups
 - class size (ratios)
- (in list order) Language Skills, Technology Infrastructure, Course Offerings, Safety, Alternatives, Special Ed., Travel Times, Transportation, Mastery-Proficiency, Electives, Attendance
- Physical plant not large enough for current student population – seems okay for 1400 to 1500 kids
- pre-WASL and post-WASL buildings (ie: 9th/10th and 11th/12th)
- Magnet alternative high school
- 10/11/12 at high school
- Issue – First to resolve is configuration of students (current and projected) and the bricks and mortar options to accomplish this
- Plusses and minuses of smaller student body size

<p><u>Positives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More options/students to participate -More control -Some kids able to connect easier -Cross responsibilities of staff, connect staff w/ student -Better counselor/student ratio -Research-based size 	<p><u>Negatives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fewer specialty classes (AP, Guitar) -Less opportunity to go to big name college -Fringe kids can find a place to belong -Higher cost of admin/student -Two HS community - division -Athletic divisions
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Both: Great Staff

Summer Survey

Cindy Meyer presented the idea of creating a brief survey the committee could ask community members to take during the summer, prior to the next meeting. Some committee members felt that you can get more responses with a web survey. However, there was some concern about reaching people with no computers in their households

Some possible survey questions were suggested by the group, There was some discussion about the type of survey question: multiple choice, yes or no, written response, etc. It was suggested that the advisory committee come up with sample survey questions, which could be sent to committee members in July or August.

Next Meeting

Thursday, Sept. 27 at 5 p.m. - District Board Room

Election of co-chair

Cindy explained duties and asked for volunteers or nominations, saying that the individual should not be a school employee or another board member. John Rowley was nominated by his wife, Lynette. No one else volunteered, and John was elected.

Summary

- Co-chairs will e-mail survey questions generated by group – 10 copies per person
- Steering committee will meet this summer to summarize tonight's work and bring ideas back to group.
- Tours for committee members will take place in the fall. A schedule will be sent during the summer.