

FACILITIES ADVISORY TEAM COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, February 12, 2009 – 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Corning Free Academy

MINUTES

PRESENT: M. Ginalski, J. Delorme, A. Danquah, B. Cameron, K. Murdock, J. Reilly, S. Romans, P. Webster, , R. Kimble, T. Tunney, , M. Whittenhall, M. Roe, M. Franklin, R. Gillespie, K. Monastra, J. Meteer, S. Bathrick, V. Zingler, J. Castiglione, K. Keeney, R. McMaster, J. Robbins, R. Smith

ABSENT: B. Pierce, N. Jakobson, K. Wilson-Houck, A. Knowles, T. Decker, J. Tobia, C. Woodcock, B. Gosden

RECORDER: K. Dutcher

VISITORS: There were several visitors in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Facilitator, Mr. Anthony Danquah. He reviewed the agenda and minutes from the January 29th meeting, which were approved by consensus.

Mr. Jeff Robbins reviewed the Educational Program Meeting Report prepared by Mr. Charles Woodcock of Hunt Engineers. Mr. Woodcock met with Principal Rick Kimble, the Nurse, Librarian, PE Staff and several teachers at Corning Free Academy Middle School relative to the needs of the building and each program area. Mr. Robbins provided the group with an aerial view of site as a guide. He also spoke briefly about the requirements for preservation of historical buildings.

The group proceeded with a tour of the building starting on the ground floor, then breaking into three smaller groups, group one toured first floor, group two toured the second floor and the third group toured the third floor.

Mr. Bill Cameron and Mr. Jeff Robbins provided the group with a PowerPoint presentation of the Middle School Subcommittee visits to Ernie Davis Middle School and Dansville Middle School. Mr. Robbins discussed the history of each of the renovations and timelines for each. The committee noted that in each building there was a seamless flow between the old building and any new construction that took place.

Mr. Mike Ginalski led the group in looking at Middle School possibilities. He introduced an activity to get the group thinking about different ideas and reviewed with the group “What we know” about middle schools, which is that:

1. Population is declining
2. Each middle school was built in the 1920's
 - Corning Free Academy – 1922
 - Northside Blodgett Middle School – 1927
3. The community agrees that a solution to the middle school problem must be a priority per the survey
4. Currently our facilities are woefully deficient when compared to all neighboring districts, which puts our children at a competitive disadvantage
5. The schools were not built with athletics, technology, and special education needs in mind
6. The buildings are historic and many in the community are very concerned about their future

Mr. Ginalski divided the Committee into four groups and reviewed the Procedure, Objective and Task for the activity.

PROCEDURE: 1) Identify a recorder, group leader, and a person to report out; 2) Identify the Advantages and Disadvantages associated with each idea; and, 3) Please note on a separate sheet of paper any questions that you feel may need to be addressed relative to your particular option

OBJECTIVE: To begin looking at options relative to finding solutions for our middle schools

TASK: In your group, discuss the idea/solution assigned to you with the information you currently have and how that particular solution addresses the following:

- Classroom Instruction/Programs
- Funding Support/Cost
- Community Support
- Classroom Size
- Space for Instructional Support Services/Office Space
- Athletic Facilities
- Equity
- School Closing/Reuse- Impact on community and neighborhoods
- Non-instructional Support
 - Transportation
 - Cafeteria

Group A

Assignment: grade reconfiguration (5/6, 7/8)

Assumption is a school of 400 kids

Disadvantage is that it splits MYP between grades 6 and 7

Some issues discussed relative to the Task items were:

- Certification is 1-6
- Grades 5-6 are developmentally alike
- This configuration might help the elementary plan (especially adding Pre-K) if grades 7/8 are at the high school-transition from 8th grade to high school is easier.
- Combination of renovation/addition would be a Advantage financial plan – more money for secondary
 - Possibility of adding Administration Building to one or both sites
 - Opportunity to build a larger/newer auditorium or gymnasium – shared by more students
 - Change of grade alignment; putting 7/8 graders with 9/12 graders
 - Could preserve CFA and NBMS which could mean community support
 - Easier to complete renovations with only 2 grades-swing space
 - If CFA/NBMS are used, transportation issues would still exist
 - There would be no equity issues
 - In order to reuse CFA-it would need fewer students
 - Less acreage needed for 5/6 building
 - Handicap issues would still exist

Group B

Assignment: renovate two existing elementary buildings into middle schools

The group prefaced that this does not necessarily mean renovating the two largest elementary buildings, Carder and Severn, but that it could mean renovating Frank Pierce and Kent Phillips.

- Classroom Instruction/Programs

Advantages: This plan would create needed space; could be designed to meet program needs

Disadvantage: A lot of new construction, especially additions would cost more money

- Funding

Advantage: BAU worth more if it is secondary schools

Disadvantage: 20 year versus 15 year amortization

- Community Support

Advantage: Innovative idea-will be supported, location is key

- School Closing/Reuse

What do we do with existing buildings?

History/property values/vacant buildings

- Classroom Size

Advantage: Renovation and/or new construction allow for appropriate classroom sizes

Disadvantage: Existing classrooms **must** be renovated

- Space for Instructional Support/Office Space

Advantages: Existing building would be office/support space

New construction would be classroom space

Disadvantage: State aid questions, more information needed

- Athletic Facilities would be site dependent, especially outdoor space

- Equity can guarantee it

- Non-instructional Support

Advantage: Clean slate

Disadvantage: Location dependent

Group C

Assignment: one middle school (grades 6-8)

The group prefaced this by assignment by asking the question - "is there a possibility that this would lead to one high school?"

- Classroom Instruction/Funding/community Support

Advantages: Highest cost allowance
Consolidate programs and efficient use of staff
More energy efficient
Equity in programs

Disadvantages: Population size (1,200-1,300 adolescents), if one high school
Tough sell to community
Alumni groups
Possible fewer opportunities for students (sports, band, etc.)

- Classroom Size

Advantage: Larger (900 sq. ft)
More efficient instructional space
Handicap accessibility

Disadvantage: Number of students – possible large numbers

- School Reuse is there potential for reuse?

- Athletic Facilities field space could be created and it would be modern

- Transportation advantage for some/disadvantage for others

- Cafeteria

Advantage: Supervision easier

Disadvantage: Difficult schedule

Group D

Assignment: renovate the existing middle schools

The group asked the question, can the two buildings be renovated to meet the educational needs given the current middle school population?

The consensus of this group was that in renovating the existing middle schools it could not support the educational needs of 3 grade levels. They felt there was not enough site space and they could not be made equitable. To do so, you would have to reduce the number of students or the number of grade levels. They initially rejected reducing the number of students as they didn't think the idea of a third middle school made sense.

Assumption: 2 grade levels

- Don't just retrofit buildings that won't really meet the needs (classroom spaces, field space, parking)
- What would we use the buildings for (adaptive reuse)?
 - elementary schools/5-6 building
 - administrative offices
 - apartments/assisted living facility
 - Corning Community College dorms
 - Swing space
 - BOCES leasing space

The entire group reconvened to discuss the possibilities outlined by each sub group.

Mr. Ginalski thanked the group for all of their hard work this evening. He noted at the next meeting he will introduce an activity which will provide a ranking by importance. He also handed out two articles relative to grade reconfiguration that he asked the group to read.

During the process check, the entire team expressed satisfaction with the meeting and that they were pleased that we were moving forward and in the right direction

Mr. Danquah announced that the next meeting will be at Northside Blodgett Middle School at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 26th. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.