

**Prepared Notes for Board Meeting**

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The purpose of this work session, according to correspondence from the administration, is for our Facilities Consultant to get direction for preparing for remaining Facilities Task Force work.

Before delving into some high level detail, I want to take this opportunity, one of many I hope, to thank the task force for their efforts. Over the last year, it's been very enlightening being able to listen in on many of the table discussions as the task force has talked about what we are as a school district and what we could be.

The ideas that have been generated have been very creative, but I want to go back to the very beginning. We started the facilities process because we had to solve two problems – capacity in the elementary grades and aging facilities. As we got deeper into the process, a third problem emerged – that of having enrollment at the high schools balanced so we can offer equal number of opportunities, although not necessarily exactly the same opportunities to students no matter where they are in the district. After a period of reflection, a consensus started to emerge that capacity was the biggest issue, which leads us to today.

I also want to reiterate my belief that while long term planning is essential, we and future boards will have plenty of time to debate the contents of Phase II and Phase III of any master plan. No doubt, these plans will shift many times over the years, so my comments are only reflective of what I believe we need to do in Phase I to start addressing these problems. Obviously, everyone in the room that has participated in this process has an opinion. Here is mine.

In a recent poll, 83% of our constituents with children enrolled in Worthington Schools believe our district is on the right track as opposed to 8% that believe we are on the wrong track. Let me say that again – 83% of the constituents that know us best like the way that things are going. Of the 8% that believe we are on the wrong track, only 7% of them stated “aging facilities” as the reason why. The logical conclusion is that while our buildings may be aging and not passing muster with the OFCC, the product we are delivering meets with overwhelming approval by our customers and the conclusion I draw from that is that we should be cautious making huge changes to the district. I believe we need to take a simpler approach to solving our problems than the approach suggested by either of our options.

For example, in our K-6 scenario, we need to find 600 elementary school seats to meet projected enrollment. There are a number of ways to get 600 elementary school seats that do not involve alternative elementary schools, changing the middle school structure or anything of the kind. For example, we could build a 600 seat elementary school at a cost of somewhere between 15,000,000 - 18,750,000 in the soccer field in back of Worthington Park. We could rebuild Brookside Elementary at a cost of 14,500,000 and gain 300-400 seats and use modular classrooms as needed to make up the difference (or use the old Brookside, for that matter), or we

could rebuild both Brookside Elementary and Colonial Hills elementary at a cost of 33,250,000, solve two condition issues and have the necessary capacity.

The bottom line is that we can solve the capacity issue for no more than 20,000,000 and use the remaining funds to address condition issues throughout the district.

The K-5 scenario, while very interesting, spends too much replacing and/or renovating buildings that may not need to be replaced or renovated, at least not right away and it introduces complexity unnecessarily. Essentially, we move the problem from elementary capacity to middle school capacity and spend 44,600,000 fixing that problem while ignoring elementary school condition issues. Given that there is no clear consensus on the educational value of K-5 vs K-6, I would opt for a K-6 scenario as the least disruptive approach to solve the problem.

I want to briefly touch on redistricting. In virtually any cost-effective scenario that solves for capacity, some amount of redistricting is going to be required. Worthington is going to have to decide, as a community, if it wants to spend money avoiding redistricting. That's certainly an option. You can keep boundaries exactly as they are now and rebuild or renovate each building to its required peak capacity. I am not in favor of this approach, I mention it only to draw out the fact that redistricting avoidance is potentially costly.

After we solve the capacity issue, we should use the rest of our bond funds to solve condition issues. The decision to renovate or replace should be based on the 10-15 year cost of maintaining vs. the cost of rebuilding and with sensitivity to the historic nature of some of our buildings. I believe we would be best served by using the Worthington Schools facilities team to create a modified version of the OFCC report for each building that only includes the items that are of importance to the school community. For example, the OFCC report on Colonial Hills indicates we need to spend \$576,000 to replace technology and provide data ports in each classroom. We don't, because we have wireless access in all parts of the building. A locally created report would eliminate such anomalies and give decision makers a clearer indication of the renovate/replace decision. I would be cautious making any renovate/replace decision until that work is done.

Finally, we have the issue of high school balance. Since I believe that redistricting is inevitable in this process, I also believe it is possible that some balance may be achieved by how we address capacity. For example (and please, this is just meant to be illustrative and not representative of any specific plan), if Brookside is rebuilt to a larger capacity and students who currently attend East Side schools are rezoned to Brookside, that would ultimately add to the number of students at Kilbourne and subtract from the number of students at Thomas. There is a stumbling block which the task force must address. Any action taken to increase the number of students at WKHS that does not split middle school feeder patterns must also increase the number of students at McCord. Assuming 80 kids at Phoenix and a McCord capacity of 620, the most you can supply to WKHS would be 1400 kids (2 x 700). That's not enough to achieve high school balance, so we need to add another 200 students to the capacity of West Side middle schools if we are to achieve the desired balance at the high school or we need to break a middle school to high school feeder pattern. The cost of renovating McCord to accomplish this is 10,000,000. The task force needs to decide if it's worth it to avoid splitting a feeder pattern.

In summary, I would like to see a simpler solution that still addresses all 3 problems. I absolutely recognize that I am eliminating the possibility of additional choice through an alternative elementary school and the possibility for more educational options that might be available to students through 2 large middle schools. Both of these proposals might be good ideas, but that's not why we embarked on this process. We needed to solve two problems – capacity and condition and address high school balance along the way. I prefer the simplest solution that accomplishes this. To that end, I'd like the task force to answer these essential questions.

1) How much of a premium do you believe Worthington is willing to pay to avoid redistricting. In other words, if I have two ways to solve capacity and one spends 10 million dollars more than the other but involves a lot less redistricting, is it worth it?

2) How much of a premium is Worthington willing to pay to avoid splitting middle school to high school feeder patterns given a requirement to balance enrollment at the high schools. We can renovate McCord for to 800 students and including the 80 at Phoenix, that gives us 880 West Side middle school seats or 1760 seats at WKHS, or we can split a middle school feeder pattern to achieve that balance.

3) How would the task force like the district to prioritize remediation of condition issues assuming capacity issues are resolved.

I thank everyone for their time.