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Weston County School District #1

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District Vision Statement Related
To
Facilities

Our current grade configuration includes two K-5 elementary schools, one 6-8 middle school and one 9-12 high school.

Education Issues

The district's mission is to provide the best education possible for its students. The educational priority is in conflict with the capacity issues as identified by the new School Facilities Commission guidelines. The district has operated on a traditional grade system, with particular emphasis on small class sizes in K-5. One compromise between capacity and education is to move the fifth grade up into the remodeled middle school, which raises some significant educational concerns. The district vision is to find the best possible resolution of these conflicts without sacrificing educational quality. With various grade populations, the class sizes will/may increase beyond what is desirable in the middle school. Students benefit from a "homeroom" teacher in the younger grades who help them coordinate the assigned tasks from other subjects. How this will happen in the "intermediate school" is a concern, as is whether or not our fifth grade teachers would have any new certification issues. Another educational concern is the awareness that middle school years are the "riskiest" given that many students choose their path to success or failure at this time, and whether or not our fifth grade students would start this process earlier or be more at risk given more exposure to this developmental level. Another educational issue is parent support for this change. Parents have some concerns about exposure to older children and teens. The fifth and sixth grade groups will have a significant amount of contact with 7th and 8th grades, along with briefer contact with high school students. Without parent support for this change, the district will fail with this challenge. Parents appear to prefer to avoid the above issues in favor of larger class sizes and the loss of science as a special; it is hard to make that choice now given what many see as

a coming recession and the resulting budget constraints, as well as the need to increase science interest and education in our nation.

Current Significant Impacts

WCSD # 1 is currently addressing two major issues. The 6-8 middle school is ranked 21st on the School Facilities Commissions prioritized project list because of capacity, condition and suitability. Capacity issues have also been identified at the Newcastle Elementary School, where we are currently housing four classes in two portable buildings.

Another major obstacle for this district is that both the elementary and middle school exceed the new School Facility guidelines for square footage; the elementary has 2,864 sq ft. over the allowable configuration, the middle school is 2,900 sq. ft. over the current cohort calculations. All of the above mentioned buildings were built under the appropriate guidelines at the time of construction.

Condition Issues

The district's middle school building, housing grades 6-8, is being impacted by capacity, conditions, and suitability. The building was ranked 18th on the School Facilities Commissions 2007 priority project list. Other district buildings that are being evaluated by a structural engineer are the career vocational areas that are located on the middle school/high school site. There may be a need for a possible replacement of the Newcastle Elementary School roof.

Capacity Issues

As previously mentioned, the district is working at solving two capacity issues that concern the district and parents in regard to student safety. The elementary school has four classroom units out of the main building's footprint. The middle school also has four classroom units out of the main building's footprint. The district is currently exploring the option of moving the 5th grade out of the elementary to the middle school building. As a result of several new business developments, an ever growing state, the existence of the Honor Camp facility in our community, and a level of 20%-25% of our student population in special education, the challenge is to do what is educationally sound.

Suitability Issues

In regards to the middle school, the cost to perform needed renovations to the HVAC system is estimated at \$1.7 million. There are also electrical and plumbing issues the we will start to address this summer with major maintenance funds. Other issues related to this building will include window replacement, site work, drainage and a solution for office security, which impacts all.

Planning Disposition of Facilities

If the district chooses not to move the 5th & 6th grade to Osage, the district plans on closing the Osage school, which is approximately 28,000 sq. ft.

Strategies for SFC Goal Achievement

The district is working with the School Facilities Commission to redesign the middle school complex. The areas which scored in the low areas in the recent building study will be a priority, along with the list items. It is the district's focus to fix the main entry security as well. Although our two new schools were built under the guidelines of the WDE (pipeline schools) the district will continue to evaluate square footage and other areas to better align with SFC goals.

Summary

The district vision for facilities will be upheld as it plans to make decisions as responsibly and thoughtfully as possible. The realistic consideration of the education, condition, capacity, suitability and disposition issues discussed above will occur, along with consideration of possible needs for the next twenty years. As always, the district commits itself to the provision of a great education as well as adherence to the guidelines of the School Facilities Commission.

SUMMARY

Newcastle MS issues can be mitigated with major maintenance and previously funded minor cap projects.

On September 4, 2009 Superintendent Brad LaCroix, Business Manager Deb Sylte, Operations and Maintenance Supervisor Greg Gregory participated in a telephone conference with SFC staff to discuss the Facility Plan for the district.

- i) The configuration is as shown in the WDE directory. However, one of the two elementary schools identified in the vision statement has been moth balled. There is excess square footage in the schools. Much of this comes from the high school and the elementary school, both of which were funded by the State of Wyoming in 2002.
- ii) The inventory of facilities was updated.
- iii) The middle school renovation is in design and construction will begin in the spring of 2010. This along with the moth balling of Kitty Moats will eliminate many 1's and 2's. A combination of a CapCon contract and MM will be used for the renovation. The renovation should address capacity issues into the future. The other facility that will need major work in the foreseeable future will be the VoEd building. This work will need to be planned and most likely phased beginning in approximately 24 months.
- iv) The focus of MM will be the middle school renovation.
- v) Real property was reviewed. The acreage for the high school/middle school site may be too small. The district will investigate this and contact Stan Hobbs with changes.
- vi) The only enhancement (track) in the district was approved by the Commission in a recent meeting.
- vii) Student enrollment projections were reviewed and appear to be accurate.
- viii) There is no projection for acquisition of real property.
- ix) The only cost estimate needed is related to the middle school renovation which is in contract development status now.

- x) There are no leased spaces.

Date June 29, 2010

Name Brad LaCroix, Deb Sylte, Greg Gregory, Nancy Nuttbrock, Merle Smith, Jim Lowham

(i) A full description of the District's long-term goals and strategies related to its facilities, including disposition of facilities and modification of grade configurations and school boundaries;

Changes or modifications:

No changes. Kitty Moats was closed last year. A decision as to what to do with the building will be made in November.

(ii) An inventory of all existing facilities and the current and anticipated future use of each facility, including grade configuration and student population, if applicable;

Changes or modifications:

Some changes on spreadsheet

(iii) A full description of all anticipated new or replacement facilities to be funded for the district over the next ten (10) years with a thorough explanation of the reasons supporting the perceived need for the new or replacement facility;

Project List Items:

(iv) A full description of the anticipated impact of maintenance or renovation of facilities on the district's long-term goals and strategies, including non-construction alternatives.

Project List Items:

Major Maintenance Items: Seeking energy grant money to re-do some facilities. If not fully successful, Vo Tech will need some MM for HVAC and lighting. Roof warranty at HS is still being contested—MM may need to be used. Still have pool issues.

(v) An inventory of all real property owned by the district along with an explanation of the current and future use of the property. District owned property shall be considered, and if possible, used for all construction projects prior to new property purchases being considered or approved;

Changes or modifications:

none

(vi) Identification of all local enhancements and community facilities which are capable of supporting any aspect of the district's long-term goals and strategies, including any current use of such facilities;

Changes or modifications:

Bleachers and crow's nest

(vii) Student enrollment projections for the district and each facility within the district in accordance with W.S. 21-15-116(a) and these rules and regulations;

Changes or modifications:

No known changes to the projection; some are being discussed in the community

(viii) Projections for acquisition of land in accordance with the district's long-term goals and strategies and the subsections of this rule;

Changes or modifications:

none

(ix) Cost estimates in current and future dollars for the facility remedies proposed in the facility plan;

Project List Items:

Other: MM or grants should be able to address foreseeable needs

(x) Identification of all leased spaces, including the identity of the lessee/lessor;

Changes or modifications:

none

(xi) Cross-reference to any appropriate additional source of relevant information, including computer databases maintained by the Commission;