

**Northwestern Lehigh School District
6493 Rt. 309, New Tripoli, PA 18066
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING - MFP
District Board Room
Wednesday, July 17, 2019, 6:00 PM**

1. Opening Procedures

1.01 Call to Order

The July 17, 2019 Special Board Meeting - MFP of the Northwestern Lehigh School District Board of Directors was called to order at 6:02pm by President Willard Dellicker

1.02 Opening exercises included the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

1.03 Roll Call

PR/AB

AB	John Casciano	PR	Todd Hernandez	PR	Alan Rex
PR	Willard Dellicker	AB	Todd Leiser	AB**	Phil Toll
AB	Joseph Fatzinger	PR	Marci Piescienski	PR	James Warfel

*** P. Toll arrived at 6:26 PM*

Also Present:

Michelle Slack, Michael Bell, Michael Spadafora, Danielle DiLeone, Randy Galiotto, John Gunning, Brian Moore, Arthur Oakes, William Dovico, Leslie Frisbie, Troy Sosnovik, Jennifer Holman and Kaitlin Brobst.

1.04 Approval of Agenda

Moved: A. Rex

Seconded: M. Piescienski

Vote: 5 Aye, 0 Nay

1.05 President welcomed guests

1.06 Courtesy of the Floor

None at the time

1.07 Purpose of Special Meeting

Discussion of the phases and priorities of the Alloy 5 Master Facility Plan (MFP)

2. Master Facility Plan

2.01 Middle School Program Space Discussion

A. Oakes stated that the consultants from Alloy 5 and D'Huy Engineering, who have been working with the district through this process, are present this evening. The team has been working with W. Dovico to ensure all educational needs are met with the new space planning.

W. Dovico started by stating that the middle school celebrated its 25th anniversary about two years ago. The Middle School Space Utilization Task Force Committee spent a year investigating, researching best practices, conducting middle school site visits, and collaborating on recommendations for the use of space at the middle school including site visits to eight different schools. Districts with brand new buildings, those who have repurposed old spaces, and buildings about the same age as our middle school were all visited. The research of the Space Utilization Task Force, as well as the District Feasibility Study conducted in 2015 by KCBA (and again in 2019 by Alloy 5), were both used when making recommendations for the middle school construction and renovation project. The following deficiencies were identified:

Deficiency #1-Location of Guidance and Conference Room:

Currently, visitors have to enter the hallways and student occupied areas to attend meetings in the conference room and/or to meet with counselors at the middle school. Approximately 100 IEP meetings, 35 MDE team meetings, 30 GIEP meetings, 10 CLIU IEP meetings, 10 SAP meetings, and 15 disciplinary meetings are held in the conference room each year, which means approximately 200 parents/visitors have access to the hallways and students annually.

The proposed solution to this deficiency is to have one secure area that houses the administrative offices, guidance offices, conference rooms, nurse's suite, and school police officer. This would reduce the safety concern with visitors having to enter the hallways and other areas that are occupied by students. This would also be beneficial because the guidance counselors and administrators collaborate on a daily basis. Additionally, moving the guidance office would mean two conference rooms would be available for meetings, which will decrease the number of parents/visitors who will have access to the hallways. This proposed move is contingent on also moving the science classrooms. The total estimated cost of this solution is \$536,250.

Since all visitors are buzzed in, then escorted across the hall to a room, J. Warfel inquired about the significance of the security issue. He also believes that guidance offices and administrative offices should be separate in the building since they serve separate purposes, with guidance being a safe place for students to go for help and administration often being a place for disciplinary issues.

W. Dovico responded that he agrees that guidance/counseling and administration have different roles. Under the proposed plan, the offices will be connected to one another, but will have separate entrances and remain separate entities. He added that over the past ten years, there's been an increase in the number of students who have needs in both areas, leading to a blending of both guidance and administrative involvement.

W. Dovico noted that the procedure in the middle school has been for visitors to be walked across the hall for the past 27 years and there have not been any major issues; however, it is the recommendation of other schools to maintain visitors in one area where they do not have any access to students. Recommendations were made based on best utilization of space, best practices, and improvement of programs.

J. Warfel explained that ultimately the board is responsible to explain cost to tax payers. A. Oakes added that the middle school is the last of the four buildings that allows visitors to enter the building unescorted. J. Warfel asked for clarification that all visitors enter through a secure entrance. W. Dovico explained that the current system is for visitors to buzz in to get into the vestibule. They then show their ID, sign in, and are either escorted next door or allowed to walk to the guidance conference room alone. J. Holman then added that though recommendations are made on best educational benefits, administrators are also aware that some of their recommendations are not worth the dollar amount associated with them. All the items listed are prioritized and it is important to know how they got on the list in the first place. In addition to solving facility issues, the Master Facilities Plan is also educationally focused. If it is decided that the price tag for moving the science rooms is not worth it, that also means the nurse and guidance room moves and art room expansion will not take place. W. Dovico added the importance of weighing the district's needs and wants in order to get "the most bang for our buck" in terms of renovations.

Deficiency #2-Nurse's Suite:

Currently, the nurse's suite size is not conducive to the number of visits and use. Treatment areas are located near the waiting area, which is a privacy concern. The nurse's suite sees an average of over 400 district visits/year, over 600 IU visits/year, and over 23 visits/school day. The proposed solution to this deficiency is to renovate the space to provide more square footage, more privacy, and an overall more functional use of the space. The total estimated cost of this solution is \$256,880.

J. Warfel questioned how many students, leading to the 600 visits per school year, are in the IU MDS classroom. W. Dovico answered that there is an average of 3-7 students in the classroom, depending on the year. J. Warfel questioned if those 600 visits are too much of a demand on our district nurses. W. Dovico responded that the district nurses often have to assist with the IU students who have their own private nurse, depending on the gender of the students and staff in the IU classroom. J. Warfel added that the recently held IU Coordinating meeting approved a move towards classroom nurses for the IU. These additional resources may be available at some point in the future.

J. Holman said the IU has difficulty getting nurses to assist on an impromptu basis and that the IU nurse would still need to utilize the district's physical nurse suite to change a student, which would still result in a privacy issue. W. Dovico stated that the IU visits to the nurse's suite would decrease if the IU classroom had its own bathroom and changing area. The current size of the IU classroom does not allow for this extra space.

Deficiency #3-Science Labs not located in Team Wings:

The committee focused on the cluster concept, which may be the most important way to create an environment which represents a comfortable transition between elementary and high school. Clusters create small communities of learning, breaking down the school into supportive "family units." The students' academic curriculum can occur within the confines of the cluster. Additional activities, such as physical education, music, etc. may occur in activity centers located outside of the cluster areas. Currently, ELA, math, and Social Studies classes are located in the team wing. Students must travel to other side of building to attend their science class. One team does not have a science lab experience because there is no science classroom. They conduct the labs on carts and mobile equipment. All other teams have a true science lab experience.

The proposed solution to this deficiency is to relocate science rooms to team wings and create a science lab in the team wing that does not currently have one. Advancing the cluster concept would advance the district's teaming initiative and continue to promote "family units" within the building. The total estimated cost of this solution is \$1,605,500. W. Dovico stated that the price of this solution in terms of program enhancements and educational benefit may not be worth it. There are extra classrooms in the lower wing that could be made into a science lab. He also added that if the science labs are not moved, the changes in space to the guidance room, conference room, and nurse's suite would not be possible.

Deficiency #4-Size and Location of Art Room:

Currently, the art room size and location are not ideal. The size of the art room is not conducive to the amount of materials and types of projects. Other sites have closer to 2.5 rooms making up their art room. One side is used for dirty materials, such as clay. The other side is used for clean materials (pencils and drawings). Additionally, over the past five years, the teaming aspect of the related arts team has been emphasized. Also, the location of Makerspace is not ideal for supervision of students in two areas. It is difficult to have students work independently in the Makerspace due to its location.

The proposed solution to this deficiency is to move the art classroom to a location in the related arts wing, in order to place it with the other related arts classes and to gain more space. Also, the Makerspace would move to the computer/technology classroom. The spaces would be separated by windows and a door.

The current art classroom is 800 sq. ft. The proposed would be 980 sq. ft. The current Makerspace is 630 sq. ft. The proposed would be 1030 sq. ft. Currently, the art room leads into the Makerspace. The art teacher uses it as a space to store materials and for students to work. Again, the art room cannot be moved if the science room is not moved. The total estimated cost of this solution is \$617,500.

Deficiency #5-No Instructional Space for 40-60 Individuals:

Currently, there is no space large enough to bring two classes together (e.g. ELA and Social Studies) for interdisciplinary lessons. The auditorium, café, and gym are not conducive to this type of event. During community events, such as Veterans Day and class speakers, classes cram into a regular sized

classroom to participate in events. Additionally, there is no work space that allows the entire middle school staff to come together for professional development and faculty/staff meetings. The proposed solution to this deficiency is to create one Large Group Instruction (LGI) room, similar to the high school, for students to collaborate during interdisciplinary units and participate in events. The room could also be used for other purposes, such as interventions and counseling sessions. This change is possible even without the change in guidance office and science rooms. The total estimated cost of this solution is \$443,330.

Deficiency #6-Auditorium:

The middle school auditorium is used heavily during the school year for school and community events. It is the largest auditorium in the district, with over 800 total seats. In 2018-2019, the auditorium was used 195 times for various events, including both day and evening activities. The auditorium has had little updating in the past 27 years. The sound system, media display system, acoustics, and finishes do not meet the current standards for use. Currently, there are three separate sound systems, one used for video, one for microphones, and one for performances. Video/media is displayed using a portable projector which has limited capabilities and also blocks the aisle. The lighting system is limited in its ability to adequately provide lighting during the variety of events held in the auditorium. The proposed solution to this deficiency is to update the sound, light, and media systems to meet current functionality and standards and to improve the acoustics and update the finishes. The total estimated cost of this solution is \$1,291,225.

A. Oakes added that much of the cost will be due to making code compliant updates. A sound engineering study completed a few years ago recommended new seating, new curtains, removal of carpet, redesigning the entrance to the stage, and improvement of the video and audio aspects of performances. J. Holman stated that the stage in the auditorium is not currently handicap accessible. W. Dovico added that the curtains are showing quite a bit of wear and tear.

Deficiency #7-Gymnasium:

The middle school gymnasium is used heavily during the school year for school and community events. This past school year, there were 325 SchoolDude requests for use. The sound system, floor, and finishes do not meet the current standards for use. Currently, the physical education teachers use a portable sound system. When the gym is occupied, the sound systems make it hard to hear audio and announcements. Additionally, the floor needs to be replaced due to safety and health concerns. The proposed solution to this deficiency is to update the sound, light, and media systems to meet current functionality and standards and to improve the acoustics and update the finishes. The total estimated cost of this solution is \$750,100.

A. Oakes stated this is the number presented previously. Currently, the district is out to bid and will receive prices tomorrow. The district is working with Miller Flooring in regards to designing the gym floor. He added that the \$750,100 also includes replacing the floor in the auxiliary gym.

Deficiency #8-Exterior Site Maintenance:

Currently, the location of the main entrance is confusing to visitors. The lighting of the walkways and parking lot are inadequate and pose a safety concern (even with the addition of portable lighting), especially considering the number of evening activities held at the middle school. Signage does not clearly delineate main locations of the building, such as gymnasium, main office, and auditorium. The proposed solution to this deficiency is to install lighting on all walkways, increase parking lot lighting, and install larger, clearer signage. The total estimated cost of this solution is \$850,200.

A. Oakes added that the four deficiencies reviewed at the end of W. Dovico's presentation are all components the district will be tasking consultants on how to move forward. J. Warfel asked if the \$850,200 includes the planter in front of the doorways. A. Oakes confirmed that it is included.

Deficiency #9-HVAC and Sprinkler System:

A. Oakes noted that Alloy 5 first starting collaborating with the district due to HVAC and sprinkler concerns. The middle school had extensive mold at the start of the 2018-2019 school year to the point that classrooms had to be relocated to Weisenberg Elementary for about a month. A. Oakes stated that the building is as efficient as it can be, considering the system it currently has. Currently, the middle school has a univent central plant HVAC system. Although the system was an effective

design when the school was built, it is well past its life expectancy and does not allow for the control of humidity.

The current sprinkler system is a tank fed dry system above the wooden trusses throughout the building. A new pump and electric controls have been installed in the past few years. The leaking pipes above the ceiling need to be replaced, as well as an inspection of the piping.

The total estimated cost to fix the HVAC system is \$6,700,000. A. Oakes noted the listed cost for the HVAC system is the highest it will be, with it likely that the actual cost will be lower. The total probable cost to fix the sprinkler system is \$50,000. Fixing the sprinkler system is for building protection, not for life safety.

W. Dovico summarized that the administration team is in agreement that the gym, auditorium, and exterior of the building are their top priority. He added that he believes the LGI classroom is also an addition that would be utilized heavily and be of great benefit to the middle school. W. Dovico stated that even if major renovations are not completed, updates to the classrooms (cabinetry, chalk boards, white boards) and finishes will still need to be made due to the buildings age.

A. Oakes stated it is his hope that the board will give direction on moving forward with the above mentioned priorities. Updating the gym, auditorium, and building exterior is able to be done without borrowing money. The other deficiencies require borrowing money to fix. The funding for these projects will be reviewed in depth at the August board meeting. W. Dellicker inquired if the LGI room could be considered a stand-alone project. W. Dovico responded that it can.

J. Holman confirmed that the gym, auditorium, and building exterior are all projects that are not contingent upon something else being moved from those spaces. J. Warfel stated that he has been operating under the assumption that fixing the HVAC is necessary for the health and safety of the school and in order to fix the mold issue. He asked if this is correct. A. Oakes noted that the building is safe as it stands. The short term solution to the mold issue is the use of dehumidifiers in the classroom. If the board is not open to borrowing money to fix the HVAC system, the district will need to purchase dehumidifiers in order to keep the building healthy. J. Holman added that she has asked L. Frisbie to come up with the changes the district can afford to make without borrowing money. The cost of moving the science classroom and fixing the HVAC system exceeds the reserves of available money, when considering the capital funds that the district currently has, the money left from the high school renovations, as well as money being used to cover current summer projects.

J. Holman stated that she, A. Oakes, and L. Frisbie have started to put together a presentation for the August workshop meeting. She asked for direction from the board in regards to whether or not the board will support borrowing money. A. Oakes added that the boards' approval of borrowing money will allow for a tighter dollar amount to be presented at the August meeting. If the board is not willing to borrow money, the project will need to be put on hold until a funding source is agreed upon.

J. Warfel asked if the renovation and movement of the science room is being removed from consideration at this time. J. Holman stated that the district is looking to prioritize the projects. J. Warfel asked if borrowing money to move the science room is being discussed at this time. J. Holman responded that the science rooms can only be done if the board is willing to borrow more than \$10 million. J. Warfel inquired as to what will be done with the totality of the \$27 million renovations, including elementary changes, presented to the board in April. J. Holman responded that the renovations were all phased. The middle school project is the next phase after the elementary projects. It will cost \$3.1 million to update the auditorium, gymnasium, and building exterior, and to add the LGI room. The district would then have to borrow money for the HVAC.

L. Frisbie then clarified that since the middle school project is such a big project, it cannot be completed without borrowing money. The district needs to know how much money the board is willing to borrow to fund the middle school project, versus what amount will need to be funded through other sources. She is working to refine a five-year plan to be presented in August that will cover costs based off capital reserve, leftover construction fund, and additional use of the general fund balance. J. Warfel stated that he does not support borrowing money in order to move the science rooms. He

does not believe the location of the science rooms is integral to the teaming concept of the middle school.

W. Dellicker stated that he is in support of updating the gym, the auditorium, and making the exterior site improvements, as well as the addition of a LGI room. He also feels the HVAC and sprinkler need to be addressed. All of these items together will cost \$10 million. The high school and elementary school projects will then be funded through non-borrowing sources. W. Dellicker asked what the debt service is for a \$10 million loan. L. Frisbie answered that it is \$400,000-\$500,000. W. Dellicker noted this amount is about \$200,000 short of what the district is allowed to raise in taxes.

W. Dellicker stated that the updates to the guidance office, nurse suite, science lab, and art room would be nice to have, but are not essential. He noted that the district's highest test scores are in science. He would like to take these items off the table at this time.

W. Dellicker asked if the estimates provided are based on the individual changes that need to be made or if they are based on a cost/square foot. M. Spadafora answered that he can provide a square foot number that will provide a ball park figure, but that the specific designs used in the spaces will ultimately determine cost.

W. Dellicker asked if the numbers provided in W. Dovico's presentation are conservative. M. Spadafora explained that square footage numbers are usually pretty accurate estimates. The amount can then be solidified from there. A. Oakes added that the HVAC estimate also needs to be tightened. B. Moore added that under the all-inclusive escrow project, they are trending closer to \$5.8 million, which is less than the estimated \$6.7 million presented.

P. Toll asked if the interior of the middle school is more important than the exterior, and if the district possibly wanted to cut back on the scope of updating the outside of the building. A. Oakes stated that the district has an obligation to ensure safety and security with the addition of lighting outside the building. Additionally, ADA compliances must also be addressed. He added that, due to the middle school's age, there is only so much the maintenance crew can do to keep the building looking as good as it is. P. Toll agrees that some of the lighting needs to be addressed, but is not sure about the landscaping updates, adding that the inside of the building is what appeals to people. A. Oakes stated that there are safety components that need to be discussed in an executive session since safety concerns are not discussed in public.

P. Toll asked if the district should look at replacing the HVAC system in each room. A. Oakes stated that would quadruple the estimated \$6 million cost. R. Galiotto stated that replacing the cabinetry, tiling, ceiling, floors, doors, etc. in each room would cost at least another million dollars. M. Spadafora added that it is a domino effect: if you update the lighting, then the fire alarms need to be updated. B. Moore added that it would make sense to update the casework at the same time as the HVAC system since the casework along the exterior wall of the building will be disrupted when fixing the HVAC system. That cost is included in the \$6 million estimate. W. Dellicker asked if the estimate includes cutting the casework to fit the new HVAC system, not replacing the casework. B. Moore answered that, if possible, they will take the existing casework and move it, adding that all associated costs are included in the \$6 million estimate, but the estimate does not include new casework.

W. Dellicker shared that he thinks the middle school is aesthetically pleasing and that he does not think a lot of work needs to be done to the inside of the building. He asked where the LGI room would go. W. Dovico responded that it would be on the 200 wing of the upper floor.

W. Dellicker clarified that the next step is to define the priorities and determine how to finance the projects. A. Oakes said that some items on the MFP will be removed and that the fire alarm system will need to be upgraded. He, along with Alloy 5 and McClure, will provide drawings and more definitive costs for all updates at the meeting in August. W. Dellicker asked if the board is ok with moving forward with the LGI, gym, auditorium, exterior of the building, and HVAC system, and leaving behind the other deficiencies noted earlier. He questioned whether some of the exterior updates are necessary.

J. Holman noted the two major issues the district wants to solve are the lighting/security issue and to refine the front entrance. She asked if the board wants a cost for putting the air dale in the corner and putting in new cabinetry when updating the HVAC system. A. Oakes added that they have been able to match the cabinetry pretty closely to what is currently there. If cabinetry is going to be done, then painting and floors should also be addressed. J. Holman stated the board wants to move and bridge the cabinetry and leave the rest.

J. Warfel asked if the roof will be covered under separate funding than that discussed tonight. J. Holman responded that the roof is included in the overall funding plan. L. Frisbie clarified that borrowing could potentially be necessary for the roof.

J. Warfel noted that there is likely to be 140 fewer students in the middle school within the next five years, which will free up some space in the future to possibly make some of the changes mentioned today that will not currently be addressed. J. Holman responded that she would want to be flexible with any future space changes in the event enrollment would increase at some point. She added that W. Dovico has ideas for how teaming could change at the middle school in the future. T. Hernandez stated that he would like to see the nurse's suite grow due to student privacy issues. He feels the expansion of the nurse's suite and the art room are both important projects and would like to see them happen in the future. J. Holman stated they will present a five-year plan, along with funding options at the August workshop meeting.

2.02 Stadium Improvements Update

A. Oakes stated that the infrastructure upgrade is going well. The new phone system will be up and running by August 16. The water tank system has been replaced. The final test for approval to drink the water will take place on Monday, with a retest on Tuesday. The sewer project at the high school is ahead of schedule. The drainage has been connected to the storm water and has been taken off the sewer line. The sewer line has been partially replaced, the remainder will be done soon, then clean-up will take place. The stadium is delayed; however, the turf will be installed by August 23. The first home varsity football game is August 29. The paving of the track has been delayed due to rain and will not be complete until September.

W. Dellicker asked if we can update the township on the sewer changes. A. Oakes answered that final testing must occur first. W. Dellicker asked if the track would still be under construction for the first football game. A. Oakes responded that the track will be macadam, not all weather surface, but that all other components will be complete. The track will not be needed until spring.

3 Communications

3.01 Courtesy of the Floor

None at the time

4 Adjournment

Upon motion by A. Rex, seconded by M. Piescienski, the meeting was adjourned at 7:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Casciano, Secretary
By J. Partenio, Assistant Secretary