

MMS Questions (includes questions from LMS tour)

Q: I like the 'metal' exterior of the building. Curious to hear Jay's thoughts on the upkeep of that material.

A: The steel exterior is far less challenging to maintain than paint. The main downfall is that entire panels have to be replaced for repairs.

Q: Would it be possible to build the new MMS as a 5-8 school to alleviate crowding at IRE?

A: Yes, it would be possible but would mean additional costs. A rough estimate, only accounting for additional classroom square footage would be at least an additional \$2 million. There could be other costs too, for example if the fifth graders would need more or different playground equipment. This would mean the middle school would need to accommodate an additional 160 students. The cost per square foot is \$450. Seven more classrooms would be needed. Aside from cost, are the instructional and curriculum considerations.

Q: I'm curious about the plans or ?? for a new middle school that were drawn up back in 2012 when the IRE and MHS buildings were built. Are those usable to save money on design at this point? How far in the process did that get at that time? What were the reasons MMS was dropped last time?

A: The bond that was approved by voters in 2010 included \$17 million to rebuild Meridian High School and repair certain parts of Irene Reither Primary School. When the bond passed, there was additional money available from the state. At the time, school districts could apply for construction dollars for students who participated in Alternative Learning Experiences (ALE), since these students were considered "unhoused." MP3 enrollment at the time exceeded over 1,000 students. The state matched construction costs at approximately \$4 for every local dollar. That turned the \$17 million bond that voters approved and paid for, into over \$50 million in construction. This meant Meridian was able to also build a new IRE. When the district went through the process to add MMS, the state had been examining their rules for ALE student funding. The state reinterpreted the project and determined it didn't qualify.

Q: Capacity was a large discussion at the elementary school. How is the capacity for the current middle school?

A: Meridian Middle School is currently at 100% utilization of classroom space. They are not able to accommodate any additional classrooms, this includes four classrooms in portables. The school has been creative with making spaces for staff. For example, the counseling offices are in what was once a conference room, dark room and storage closet. Other specialists (psychologist, physical therapist and occupational therapist) are sharing a space that could be a classroom since there is no office space for them. Nurses are also using half of a classroom because their caseload is too high for the current nursing room. Our district technology team

also occupies two spaces that were originally classrooms. There are no other spaces in the district to house the technology office. The increase in student population at the elementary will lead to an increased student population at the middle school.

Q: Can a new school be designed to allow for an easier expansion/addition if the school needs it in the future. I think there are many benefits for high school and middle schools especially in smaller communities to share a common campus. I wish a new middle school could be built on the high school campus and they could both capitalize on the facilities that could be shared.

A: Yes, as a building is designed we try to incorporate ways to allow for future expansion and to reduce future cost. District owned property at the MHS campus does not have the capacity to allow for the additional traffic that would come from a MS campus. The property is also a designated site for a skills center campus. It is also cost prohibitive to the district to construct a building where there are currently no utilities in place.

IRE Questions

Q: What options do we have to handle capacity issues at IRE if MMS is prioritized for construction?

A: If MMS is prioritized the district will have three portables (six classrooms) that we will be able to move to IRE. If future growth requires, we have the option to purchase additional portables and install in the Hannegan field.

Q: What is the typical lifespan of portable buildings?

A: The OSPI calculated lifespan of all school buildings is 30 years. If properly maintained, portable buildings can last 30+ years.

Q: Are there systems designed for making portable buildings safer for students in a lockdown situation or newer portables that are designed better for the safety of the students in a lockdown situation?

A: The standard is to keep all exterior doors locked. A fence installed to create a closed campus is also an option that will be looked at.

Q: Why is the option of mirroring the Ten Mile building being discussed as an option when it may not even be feasible? Shouldn't we be looking at alternative solutions or know for sure if it is feasible?

A: We need to explore all options. The permitting process raises concerns with any project that we do and we adjust as required.

Q: Is the pie shaped classrooms a good layout to duplicate in the Ten Mile building? Do teachers like the class layouts or would they prefer a rectangular classroom?

A: We sought feedback from teachers at IRE for this answer: This is what they shared:

- My preference is a rectangular classroom.
- No, the pie shaped classrooms are not a good layout. I would not duplicate them!
- I do not like the layout. I would prefer a rectangular classroom.
- I don't mind the shape of the rooms at all. It's really nice to have interior and exterior doors. The BEST part of my classroom is the cupboards and storage spaces! So many places to store things. Our windows open a little bit and would be nicer if we could have more of the windows open or larger windows for more natural light. The corkboard walls are kind of nice. They are much cooler rooms than the other buildings. One downside is it is very hard to hide for a lockdown drill but that might be in all shaped rooms.

Q: Where would be the best location for a lunchroom if a new school was built?

A: This would be decided with the help of our architect team as we will need to take the building's structural design into consideration.

Q: If there isn't money for both buildings, what would an upgrade of a common space be and where could that go?

A: This would be decided with the help of our architect team.

Q: What if we did not develop Ten Mile into district services and had it as a backup plan if IRE runs out of space again? You could move the district services in there, but know in the back of your head it will be taken back if need be.

A: It is very cost prohibitive to move an educational space to district services. The district has that option but would not receive matching funds for future projects from OSPI once we remove it from our inventory.

Q: I still have questions if a second building at the location is ideal or if a second location in the Cordata neighborhood is more fiscally responsible - similar to the Sunnyland neighborhood school.

A: There are few things to take into consideration, first being that we do not currently have any land in the area to build. We'd need to purchase land large enough for an elementary school. In 2019, the district purchased 6.5 acres south of Irene Reither Elementary School. A benefit of building on this location is that we already own it and could connect to the septic system at Irene Reither. This will save money. There is also a cost savings by having the buildings so close, so that specialists can travel between the two buildings easily.