



Facilities Task Force Meeting
Sept. 13, 2023

Welcome

Task force members in attendance were Alec Covert, Erin Schweigert, Karl Noste, Tyler Dockins, Robert Kratzig, Todd Torgeson, Lisa Gilchrist, Adrienne Somera, Jay Yeager, Kurt Harvill, James Everett, and Angie Hoyt.

Tour Lynden Middle School

Task force members were greeted at Lynden Middle School by Tim Faber with King Architecture. He shared that before designing the new Lynden Middle School, they were presented with a similar set of issues that we face today at Meridian Middle School. Lynden School District Superintendent, David VanderYacht toured task force members through LMS. The task force was asked to use the same safety, infrastructure, condition, and learning lenses they used when they toured MMS.

Tim Faber shared the following information with task force members:

Safety:

- They eliminated as many exterior doors/access points as possible. Limited the main entrances for students to two main entrance points. One for the bus drop-off and one for the parent drop-off. The rest of the entrances are required for exiting purposes only and are either exit only or controlled by security access control.
- Traffic flow, they have centralized corridors that radiate out from the admin area for direct supervision. Direct line of site to the gym and the classroom wing. Classroom staff can easily supervise the classroom wing corridors. Wide hallways, entrance area that opens into the main commons/gathering area all contribute to allow efficient traffic flow.
- All levels and spaces in the new building are ADA accessible, an elevator is available for transport between floors.
- Secure outdoor gathering space is included as an extension of the commons, which can be opened to the commons with large glass overhead doors.

Infrastructure:

- Dedicated server rooms, MDF and IDF (technology) closets throughout the building.
- Adequate restrooms, staff toilets and locker rooms.
- Building designed to modern earthquake safety standards.
- Classroom wing extensions designed for future growth.

Condition:

- Durable finishes in impact zones, easily cleaned and resists impact.
- Exterior materials with pre-finished surfaces, less maintenance requirements. Masonry, concrete, pre-finished metal panels.
- Limited exterior painted materials.
- Mechanical system meeting Washington State energy code.
- Operable windows for fresh air in classrooms.

Learning:

- Large classrooms with lots of natural daylight
- Science classrooms, dedicated 2D and 3D Art rooms, Wood shop and robotics classroom.
- Upper classrooms take advantage of skylights for added daylight.
- Technology in every classroom to facilitate 21st century teaching.
- Adequate extended learning areas for group teaching and team building.
- Large gym and auxiliary gym for adequate P.E. and extracurricular sports.

Comments and Questions from Task Force Members

When asked if there was anything they would do different, VanderYacht said they would add air conditioning, possibly increase the space in the common area stage, auditorium, and band room, and they would plan better for community use with the key card system.

Reflections from task force members:

- The common spaces were really great. Having extra gathering spaces for classes to use but also spaces to use between classes for kids to gather would be such a nice feature for middle schoolers. I appreciate the thought put into the ability to expand in the future. I do not think they can say they were under budget when they cut the AC from the project and now have to retrofit AC into the building.
- Can a space to hold all school events be possible? Can they utilize more movable partition walls for some classes that could be removed to open up more spaces (music / Choir) if needed. Bus and traffic flow. Can an entrance or exit only be utilized off Hannegan?

- I like the 'metal' exterior of the building. Curious to hear Jay's thoughts on the upkeep of that material. The open spaces in LMS are great. The main entrance with parents walking straight into the office is a very nice safety feature. Would be nice to wood shop in the new middle school.
- The layout of the school makes a lot of sense. Having the common area/lunch area with outdoor area is a key need that the current school is lacking, and I believe would benefit everyone. Making a multipurpose for events and concerts is valuable. The office and administration were laid out well and allowed them to have the necessary space and view of all entrances and hallways. We should really try to replicate having the arts, wood shop, tech rooms like they did. It made sense to have them separate from the other classrooms. We need to learn from the lack of room for the choir and music rooms. We also need to learn from the lack of HVAC or AC in the building. Very hard to learn as you are side tracked due to heat. It seemed like they had to revamp parent student drop off after school was built. We need to be very cognizant of car and bus flow for drop off and pick up. We have a lot to be desired when it comes to this in our schools especially since we do not have the same space. Having a space for para education really stood out. Having an office and place to support students. The out of classroom learning areas is a good idea and should be replicated.
- I would be interested in talking about the scaling as that school was built for a larger student body. Can't really make it smaller except for having fewer actual classrooms? Would the new school house our tech department like the current one does? If so, we need to make sure they have a space.
- The building is beautiful and the contrast in safety, security, accessibility, learning spaces, and overall feel is incomparably better than the MMS facility. The building clearly shows an investment in students and staff by the community.
- How could we purpose-build spaces to adapt to new elective/exploratory options for our kids? (Woodshop, STEM Lab, etc.)
- The common learning areas were amazing. The windows and lighting create an awesome vibe. There were numerous areas to work with small groups. The design allows for 21st century learning.
- Walking through this school, I can imagine that kids feel known, loved and valued so much. Kids often feel that the space around them is a reflection of how folks feel about them as students.

Next meeting is at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 26.