

Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Center Advisory Group
Recommendations Presented to Dr. Baker
March 2015

Project Background and Alignment with The Bellingham Promise

In 1954, the Bellingham School District acquired approximately 130 acres of conservation land on the south end of Lake Whatcom from the county in an exchange of a former school site property. Over the next fifty years, the site was developed and used by different grades within the school district for environmental education, history of Whatcom County pioneers, and middle school leadership programs, as well as by community organizations such as local scout troops and the YMCA. Currently, the site has an extensive trail system, six rustic Adirondack sleeping cabins, storage sheds, a pioneer cabin, and a ropes course.

In June 2013, Bellingham Public Schools held a meeting of district administrators, teachers, and community partners to discuss the possibility of including the Gordon L. Carter Environmental Education Site on the upcoming Capital Projects Bond. In that discussion, there was wide support for building basic infrastructure at the site, with several participants advocating for also developing a plan for programming and use. Based upon the recommendation from this group, the Gordon Carter site was included in the Capital Projects Bond.

In November 2013, the Bellingham community approved the \$160 million facilities bond, which included \$2 million for the Gordon L. Carter Environmental Education Site: “At the conservation site, undertake a feasibility study, design, and infrastructure, including water, electricity, septic and construct a large group structure.”

Upgrading the environmental learning site will help fulfill The Bellingham Promise’s mission to empower every child to discover and develop a passion, its vision of each student being ready for the widest range of educational and vocational options, and its core belief that the whole child is important. In the fall of 2014, an advisory group comprised of representatives from the district and the community convened to continue the visioning process for the site. The Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site Vision Advisory Group had four main charges:

- I. Develop a vision for the future of the environmental learning site that aligned with the beliefs, outcomes and strategies within The Bellingham Promise
- II. Identify short-term infrastructure needs to enable use of site
- III. Recommend programming plan for next one to three years
- IV. Be inclusive of stakeholders that include community partners, district staff, and students

Advisory group members contributed their experience at the site and their perspective and expertise in environmental and experiential education to help assess Bellingham’s needs, the opportunities the site offers, and the potential barriers faced. Working groups formed to investigate specific topics to inform the overall recommendations.

SEE APPENDIX A “Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site Vision Advisory Group”

Scope of Our Work

Given the advisory group's charge to develop a vision for the future of the environmental learning site that includes identification of infrastructure and facility needs and proposed programming, four key areas of work were:

1. reviewing the history of programming on the site for background context;
2. identifying what the site has to offer;
3. understanding current regulations and assessed infrastructure needs; and
4. discovering current and anticipated needs of our schools and our community for the site.

1. Reviewing History of Bellingham School District Programming at Carter Site

Two flagship programs were developed and offered to all students in Bellingham Public Schools for several decades: the 3rd grade pioneer program and the 6th grade environmental education science program. Both the pioneer and environmental programs were eliminated during the most recent economic recession. Over the years, the Carter site supported other programs such as an 8th grade leadership program and team-building experiences on the ropes course. Periodically, specific schools used the site to host one day or overnight field experiences. All programs operated with a very limited infrastructure (i.e. without water or septic).

3rd Grade Pioneer Program

The Gordon Carter Environmental Education Site was a special place for elementary students and their teachers studying the pioneer history of Whatcom County with a one-day experience replicating the life of an 8 or 9 year old. Students experienced life in the 1880s by participating in a variety of hands-on activities that were common in that time such as splitting and sawing wood, making butter, taking care of the chickens, panning for "gold," dipping candles, cooking over a fire, and hauling water. Students developed an appreciation of the pioneer spirit by living in an environment without running water, furnaces, TVs and telephones. This experience enabled students to compare and contrast their life today with what would it would have be like in the 1800s, living in the deep woods, entertaining themselves, and going to school. Students tied their classroom curriculum and readings with what they were learning and experiencing during their "pioneer day."

6th Grade Environmental Science

The two-day 6th grade program focused on environmental education and operated each spring with the support of Western Washington University and Whatcom Community College interns. Students engaged in hands-on outdoor activities, exploring concepts such as logging and reforestation, water quality, erosion, forest ecology and human impact on the environment. Some classes of students stayed overnight on the site. It is important to note that 6th graders at Whatcom Middle School are currently take part in an environmental education program on the site in partnership with WWU's Huxley College undergraduate and graduate students.

8th Grade Ten-day Leadership Program (excerpted from 1986 program proposal & summary report)

- *Program Proposal – Purpose:* "The Conservation Site requires yearly maintenance and upkeep. Eighth grade students are capable of performing most of those tasks. This work would afford 8th graders an extended learning experience for their Social Studies Westward Movement unit."
- *Program Accomplishments:* "In 10 days the students exceeded the proposed goals for the first year of the program. (They cleared 5800 ft. of trail, cut 4 cords of wood, walled and floored the barn and built a loft. Laid 150 rocks on the fireplace, built 30 trail steps and 2 bridges.) They demonstrated a moderate interest in tasks, but a keen interest in the goal each group set. The students participated vigorously in the process of goal setting. Many of the group had their first

in-depth look at group organization. We moved from the instinctual to the instructional on many matters concerning group function.”

- *Educational Benefits:* “The students developed various hand tool skills. They explored the nature of group interaction by participating in goal setting and finding a work place within the group. Tangential learnings about ecology, biology and mathematics were encouraged.”
- *Teacher Comments:* “Was the best hands-on experience for kids I’ve ever seen...Nonacademic students were often the ‘giants’ in the forest...A way for me to know my students in a manner I seldom see in the classrooms.”

2. Identifying What the Site Has to Offer

The history of the conservation site contributes to its rich offerings as a learning environment. Logging at the site in 1900, and another clear-cut in the southern 33 acres in 1987 that was followed by the planting of 500 Douglas-firs, has resulted in a site with stands of century-old Western Hemlock, Western Red Cedar and Douglas-fir, and a younger-growth forest made up of mixed fir, hemlock, and deciduous trees such as Red Alder and Vine Maple. Numerous species of shrubs, ferns, herbaceous plants, mosses and fungi also occur on the site. This diversity lends itself to a rich study of forest ecosystems. Additionally evidence of the historical and present-day human interactions with the land also exists, including skid roads and springboard notches in old growth stumps from logging and varying riparian characteristics from environmental impacts. The riparian habitat includes shrubs and bushes that are unique to the areas around the creek and macro invertebrates that inhabit the creeks themselves. This ecosystem provides opportunities for the study of water ecology and stewardship of the Lake Whatcom watershed.

The Pioneer Cabin, built in 1997, is in very good condition and could be used in alignment with curriculum focusing on Washington’s early history. The size of the whole site and the various unique areas contained within the 130 acres would allow for different experiences to be set-up and engaged in by different age students for different curricular needs. For example, the site has the capacity to support an upgrade of the early pioneer history experience, as well as develop other experiential opportunities on the site.

The other structures on the site are a product of the leadership and service learning experiences of middle school and high school students over the past several decades. Their maintenance and upkeep, and/or removal and replacement, could provide an opportunity for new leadership and service learning programs for current middle school and high school students.

While the site does not have direct access to Lake Whatcom, the Brannian Creek that runs through the site into Lake Whatcom and a private fish hatchery nearby both represent possible options, through building partnerships with neighbors, to expand the site’s learning opportunities in alignment with curricular objectives.

3. Understanding Current Regulations and Assessed Infrastructure Needs

Prior to including the conservation site on the facilities bond in 2013, officials of Bellingham Public School conducted their due diligence on the parameters that would impact the proposed infrastructure and structural ideas for the site. This information, while generated mostly in the spring of 2013, can serve as a guide for planning in the next few years.

Zoning: The conservation site is located within the Lake Whatcom subarea of a Rural Forestry (RF) zone. According to Whatcom County Zoning Administrator, the anticipated construction and use of an “education retreat/interpretative center” could be permitted as a conditional use pursuant to code section Whatcom County Code (WCC) 20.42.154 for “recreational facilities, including camps, community services.” Installing power, a septic system, and water would all be permitted uses within an RF zone

with the acquisition of the applicable Health Department permits and land disturbance permits for the installation of those utilities.

Infrastructure Needs:

- *Electrical Power:* Two 200 amp panels are estimated to be sufficient for serving a modest learning center (between 5,000 and 10,000 sq. feet) and the well.
- *Potable Water:* Surveyor and geotechnical consultants are needed to produce accurate topographic information and geological compassion to guide the drilling process. Based on that information, next steps in terms of building casing, pump, and a well house and conducting water testing for contaminants will be determined. If needed, investigating the option of piping water from Lake Whatcom via a negotiated easement should be considered.
- *Septic System:* Installation cost depends highly on usage estimates/size of building constructed.
- *Phone/Data:* Phone line already exists. No data estimates have been made yet.

4. Discovering Opportunities and Barriers to Meet Needs of Our Schools and Community for the Site

Opportunities: The advisory group brainstormed a wide variety of possible uses that included older students mentoring younger students, collaboration opportunities for high school students across all four high schools, team-building and on-site problem-solving by students as part of the site's development, engineering projects, service learning, and artistic retreats.

We then surveyed school principals at the elementary, middle and high school levels about current outdoor education opportunities and field trips, both existing and desired. The experiences reported varied across grade levels and across schools and ranged from as close as a school's own garden and walking for fitness in PE to whale watching in the San Juan Islands and Mountain School at the North Cascades Institute. Elementary school principals used social studies and science standards to evaluate current field trips and, where needed, propose new relevant field trips that would support the standards at each grade level. This discussion included support for exploring trips to the conservation site in 2nd grade (for the study of ecosystems), in 3rd grade (for a Native American cultural immersion experience), and in 4th grade (for the study of local history and citizenship). From this initial brainstorming discussion, a 3rd grade Native American history experience was one of the top choices to focus on developing as a district-wide program. These opportunities would require further research and discussion with schools and community stakeholders to develop and were considered as the recommendations were developed.

Barriers: Throughout the group's investigation of possibilities for the site, several barriers to realizing the vision of all students having the opportunity for experiential nature-based education were uncovered. They included issues related to programming (staffing and programming), construction (watershed zoning limitations), transportation (available buses and distance from schools), risk management, and ensuring sustainability (ongoing financial support for staff, programs, and maintenance). To the extent possible, these barriers are addressed in the following recommendations.

Committee Recommendations

The advisory group submits the following set of recommendations to align with The Bellingham Promise and deliver on the community expectation of the 2013 facilities bond initiative. These eight recommendations are grounded both in an understanding of how we have utilized the site in the past and the new opportunities for outdoor learning in the future.

Recommendation 1: Adopt Guiding Principles to Inform Strategic and Values-Based Decision-Making

The advisory group recommends the adoption of a set of principles to guide the development, stewardship, and management of the site as well as its educational purposes. The drafted principles are derived from and inspired by The Bellingham Promise and incorporate research- and experience-based

perspectives from environmental and experiential education. The principles have been framed to provide guidance for decision-making in the immediate term while remaining broad enough to allow for new opportunities in the future.

SEE APPENDIX B “Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site Guiding Principles”

Recommendation 2: Build Infrastructure to Support Regular Use by a Variety of Groups

In alignment with the details of the community-approved facilities bond, the advisory group recommends that basic infrastructure be built at the site, which includes potable water, septic, electricity, phone, and data lines. Preliminary estimates for a septic system had a large cost range depending on anticipated usage; it is suggested that the system be built as large as the budget will allow so that future growth of site usage is not inhibited by the septic system. An analysis of the driveway, particularly the entrance(s) from the road, is needed to accommodate future use of buses to transport students to and from the site safely.

Since zoning regulations for a watershed limit the time of year during which construction can be done, it is recommended that the permitting process be started in the next year so a more complete timeline to plan from can be created. This will be responsive to current enthusiasm around using the site and allow for adequate time to complete the recommended developments on the site.

Recommendation 3: Build Large-Group Facility that is Flexible and Forward-Looking

Again in alignment with the details of the community-approved facilities bond, the advisory group recommends the construction of a structure that is suitable for large group gatherings. The guiding principles on the development of the conservation site include four specific statements related to physical structures:

- the site offers an opportunity to build structures that harmonize functionally with the site’s natural biophysical features utilizing green and sustainable building practices (e.g. rain gardens, green roofing, passive and active solar, reusable building materials, LEED certified);
- structures should enhance and inspire connection with the natural world around them through biophilic design; when creating such structures, less is often more;
- the form, function and design of the structures themselves serve as a learning lab about sustainability; thus, the structures are a teaching tool; and
- site development should consider short and long-term site use adaptability.

Keeping these principles in mind, the structure should be approximately 5,000 square feet and have both an open-air covered area and a closed space that includes a dining area, a food preparation/assembly area, and bathrooms. A range of uses by the district, including staff retreats, should be part of the design considerations. An indoor facility will enable the site to be used on a year-round basis and would likely be attractive to additional community partners for rental. In our research, we found that school districts that have an environmental site have a regular practice of having other organizations use the site when not used by the district. This helps to ensure that the site is used year-round and also contributes a revenue source that helps to maintain and sustain the property.

The group recognized that decisions about the type of structure and the types of programming go hand-in-hand. Since the funding available through the facilities bond may enable construction to occur before a comprehensive programming plan is developed and funded, it is important that the structure is user-friendly and flexible to accommodate future decisions about programming. In particular, accommodating overnight and multi-day experiences should be considered into future expansion work. We believe that “good form inspires good function” and that by building with a purpose in mind that doesn’t limit future programs, a well-designed large group structure could help impel programming and regular use of the site. It should be noted that as programming is developed, additional structures may

be needed to support new learning objectives. For example, if a Native American experience is developed, a model of a longhouse might be built to create an immersive experience for students.

The group also recommends conducting a safety inspection on all existing structures on the site, including the pioneer cabin, the Adirondack sleeping cabins, other shelters, and storage sheds to determine their structural suitability and whether they should be used, rehabilitated or deconstructed with an intention to recycle or mulch the materials.

Finally, the group recommends the decommissioning of the ropes course. After evaluating its current condition and in consultation about the estimated costs involved in rehabilitating and maintaining a ropes course, the group decided that the liability would likely be too high to justify the expense. The four other ropes courses available in the county may better serve the district's needs.

Recommendation 4: Develop Programming to Support Regular and Repeated Experiences at Site

The advisory group holds that learning about the natural world is a vital part of a well-rounded education. Since immersion in nature augments and supports learning in other subject areas, the site has tremendous educational purpose that contributes to the fulfillment of the outcomes in The Bellingham Promise. Developing a lifelong connection with and sense of responsibility for the natural world helps develop respectful, compassionate humans and well-rounded community members engaged with the broader world. Experiential education in natural settings teaches life skills and outdoor education helps develop healthy, active learning environments. Finally, nature-based environments provide learning and leadership opportunities and challenges that cannot be replicated inside a classroom. Based on these wide-reaching benefits, the group recommends that programming for the site be developed at each of the levels – elementary, middle, and high school – to provide a continuum of experiences for students throughout their time in Bellingham Public Schools.

The group believes that regular experiences at the conservation site throughout one's education will enhance students' education and reinforce the value of an experiential nature-based education. To build back and expand programming at the site, the advisory group, *as a starting point*, suggests considering the following ideas for further investigation for development in the next few years:

- Elementary: Historical and Cultural Experiential Program
There was interest in collaborating with local tribes to explore and develop a learning experience that reflects the history and cultural of the area's indigenous people to align with the current 3rd grade curriculum and standards. There was also interest in revising the early pioneer program to align with current 4th grade curriculum and standards.
- Middle: Environmental Education Program
The possibility of expanding Whatcom Middle School's 6th grade environmental education program conducted with Western Washington University to the other three middle schools was discussed.
- High: Service Learning Projects
Recognizing that high school class schedules make scheduling use of the site more complex, it was suggested that the weeks after Advanced Placement (AP) exams provide an opportunity for some high school students to engage in different learning opportunities.

It should be noted that these represent initial thinking for considering district-wide opportunities to use the site at each level. In order to reach the ideal of regular and repeated experiences at the site for students across the district, opportunities for individual classes, grades, and schools to use the site should also be encouraged and supported.

We believe it is important to begin work on designing the programming in the immediate term so that when the infrastructure and structure are ready, they can be used in a meaningful way immediately. There should be current and ongoing attention to the need to secure funding to both develop and sustain programming at the site. It should be noted that community partners, especially Western Washington University, Wild Whatcom, YMCA, ReSources, and North Cascades Institute, have expressed an interest in continuing to contribute to the development of school programs for the site and possibly partner in joint staffing models.

In February 2015, the district's Department of Teaching and Learning launched several "Teaching and Learning Advisories" to address standards, instruction, and assessment decisions, and alignment communication with the outcomes of The Bellingham Promise in an ongoing manner. These advisory groups, made up of teachers, principals, and administrators from across levels and schools, will work collaboratively. Three advisory groups will be working on content areas and outcomes directly related to the outcomes articulated in the guiding principles for the Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site: 1) historians & global thinkers, 2) scientists, and 3) healthy, active individuals. To ensure the integration of the site with school-based curriculum, consideration of how the site can contribute to the realization of these outcomes should be part of the discourse within the regular advisory group meetings.

Recommendation 5: Keep Conservation Site in Mind as Transportation Needs are Analyzed

In all of our discussions of how to utilize the site regularly across the school system, the question of transportation was raised. With the current bus fleet, field trip use of buses is limited to the window in between the final morning drop-off at middle schools (9:15 am) and the first afternoon pick-up at high schools (2:15 pm). Adding in the travel time to get to the site (up to 30 minutes) means that time on the site when using district transportation is limited to approximately 3 hours (10:00 am to 1:00 pm), which inhibits the immersion experience that enhances the value of the site. As the district considers any changes and/or additions to its transportation system in the coming years, how to enable greater access to the Gordon Carter site (and other experiential field trips) through district transportation options should be part of the conversation. The use of private vehicles on field trips is allowable within district policy and should continue to be considered as an option in using the site, but there remain issues of equity for schools that are unable to secure sufficient private vehicles for such trips.

Recommendation 6: Identify Point Person at Central Services to Champion Site Development & Use

Given that these recommendations span coordinated work across facilities and operations, teaching and learning, school buildings, and community partners, it is important to identify a lead at the district office who can continue to champion this work in a way that connects all stakeholders. Over the next few years, the work will evolve from visioning and planning to implementation; maintaining the necessary momentum to see this work through will require someone who can work collaborative with those stakeholders and advocate for integrating utilization of the site into district planning.

Recommendation 7: Conduct Additional Research

The advisory group recommends further exploration of what other similar sites and programs are doing to help inform the development of the physical site and its programming. Possible site visits could include:

- North Cascades Institute Environmental Learning Center (Diablo, Washington)
- Waskowitz Outdoor School/Waskowitz Environmental Leadership School (Highline School District)
- Cheakamus Centre (North Vancouver School District, British Columbia, Canada)
- West Valley Outdoor Learning Center (Spokane, Washington)
- Chewelah Peak and Cispus Learning Centers (Association of Washington School Principals, Chewelah and Randall, Washington)

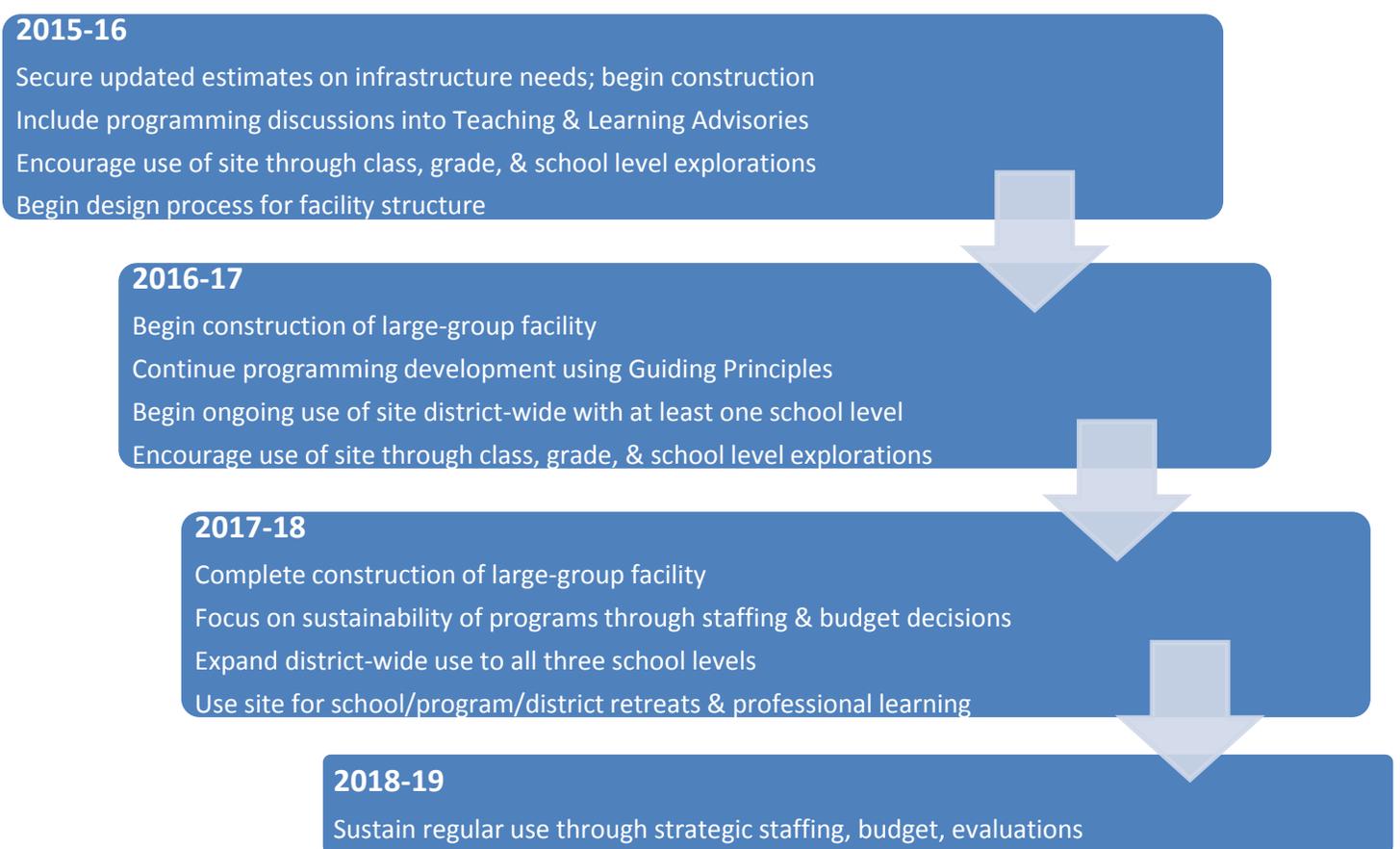
While the advisory group was comprised of a number of community partners who have used or are interested in using the site, we still need a better understanding of who else might use the property to inform the development process. A needs assessment could assess both district and community opportunities and needs.

Recommendation 8: Continue the Planning Process This Year

As stated above, there are calendar restrictions associated with construction in watershed areas. Meaningful programming takes time to develop and fund. Therefore, the advisory group recommends continuing to make progress on the site renovation planning in the immediate term to maintain current momentum and build in adequate time to complete the important parts outlined here.

Recommended Timeline

In alignment with the Guiding Principles developed by the advisory group, the recommended timeline is based on the mission to provide all children with the opportunity for experiential nature-based education and wanting to make that a reality for all the students who are currently part of our community. The advisory group is aware of the competing priorities that exist within the capital projects schedule, the Department of Teaching and Learning and throughout the district. We ask that Dr. Baker and his leadership team use these recommendations to inform the final timeline.



Budget Implications

The facilities bond provides \$2 million for building basic infrastructure and a building facility on the site. According to initial estimates, this will cover:

- Design fees, permitting, surveying, geotechnical investigations, State Environmental Policy Act, furniture/equipment, legal fees, printing, testing, inspection and associated sales tax
- Installation of power
- Installation of potable water (including well, pump, well house and testing)
- Installation of septic system
- Upgrade of phone/installation of data
- Construction of (approximately) 5000 square foot building facility

The conservation site has benefitted from community interest in its sustainability, as evidence by the establishment of the Friends of Gordon Carter to help fund programming during the recent economic recession. There are local, as well as regional and national, philanthropies that are well aligned to the vision and mission of the site and should be considered in helping to build a robust and sustainable plan of use for the site. New facilities will incur ongoing maintenance and utility costs that will need to be built into future budgets. Programming costs will be largely dependent on the types of programming. Costs will likely include certificated and classified staffing for site programs, food, supplies, and transportation. Data from prior years can be used as guidance, but a full cost analysis should be done in conjunction with program planning to develop an up-to-date cost of programs.

Summary

The advisory group believes that the Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site continues to be an important resource for our community. We believe environmental education encourages inquiry, investigation, and the development of the whole child with the knowledge, skills and an emotional connection with healthy, active individuals that enable responsible decisions and actions that impact the broader world.

Appendix A: *Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site Vision Advisory Group*

Community Partners

Aimee Frazier/Emily Barnett Highleyman/Laurel Peak, Wild Whatcom
 Jeff Giesen, North Cascades Institute
 Riley Grant, RE-Sources & WWU
 Gene Myers/Nick Stanger/Wendy Walker/Kaci Darsow/Jenny Smith, Western Washington-Huxley College
 Lynda Purdie, Whatcom Family YMCA

District Staff - Teachers

Susan Auld, Sehome High School
 Greg Dutton, Bellingham High School
 Teri Herda, Geneva Elementary School
 Emily Jones, Carl Cozier Elementary School

District Staff - Principals

Byron Gerard, Options High School/ Innovative Secondary Program
 Eric Paige, Carl Cozier Elementary
 Steve Ruthford, Geneva Elementary

Central Services

Curtis Lawyer, Capital Projects Manager
Co-Chair: Rob McElroy, Executive Administrator
Co-Chair: Anda Adams, Doctoral Resident

Appendix B: *Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site Guiding Principles*

In 2012, Bellingham Public Schools adopted The Bellingham Promise, our vision, mission, and strategic plan. In 2015, the Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site Vision Advisory Group developed a corresponding plan for experiential nature-based education at the Environmental Learning Site, which support and furthers The Bellingham Promise.

Vision: Our district ensures that all students have opportunities for experiential nature-based education utilizing the unique attributes of the Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site to strengthen connections with self, others, and the natural world.

Mission: We seek to provide all children with environmental education, understanding that learning about natural systems in outdoor learning environments is critical to developing healthy and informed students and thoughtful future citizen stewards who live a fulfilling and productive life.

Core Values

Regarding the development, stewardship and management of the Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site, we believe:

- in an inclusive, participatory design process with informed input by many stakeholders;
- it is vital to research, understand, respect and work with the natural processes and features of the site;
- the site offers an opportunity to build structures that harmonize functionally with the site's natural biophysical features utilizing green and sustainable building practices (e.g. rain gardens, green roofing, passive and active solar, reusable building materials, LEED certified);
- in building positive partnerships with other community organizations to develop, steward, and manage the site;
- structures should enhance and inspire connection with the natural world around them through biophilic design; when creating such structures, less is often more;
- the form, function and design of the structures themselves serve as a learning lab about sustainability; thus, the structures are a teaching tool; and
- site development should consider short and long-term site use adaptability.

Regarding the Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site's education purpose, we believe:

Knowledge

- learning about the natural world is a vital part of a well-rounded education, and immersion in nature augments and supports learning in other subject areas;
- understanding ecosystem functions and the interactions within biotic communities, as well as historical and present-day human influences on these, are foundations of environmental literacy and collective stewardship. The Lake Whatcom Reservoir watershed presents unique site-specific learning opportunities about forests, rivers and streams, watersheds, wetlands, and ecological and human history;
- understanding the history of indigenous and early non-native human settlement in the Whatcom County landscape connects us to our place and our own legacy;

Character

- learning in nature inspires teamwork, collaboration, innovation, and confidence and offers opportunities for personal reflection and restoration;
- developing a lifelong connection with and sense of responsibility for the natural world helps develop respectful, compassionate humans and well-rounded community members engaged with the broader world;

Action

- experiential education in changing, living, vibrant natural settings teaches key life skills, strengthening creativity, agency, critical thinking and problem solving;
- outdoor education offers healthy, active learning environments to grow strong bodies and minds;
- nature-based environments provide learning and leadership opportunities and challenges that cannot be replicated inside a classroom.