



**Minutes Meeting #8
Alderwood Elementary School
Ed Spec/Design Advisory Committee
Thursday, April 18, 2019**

Micah Smith, Alderwood Elementary School principal, welcomed everyone and expressed how excited he was to be here today, a very special meeting, where the team from Dykeman will share the site and floor plans that hopefully reflect both the committee's work and what we heard from the community last June.

Ron Cowan, Executive Director of Capital Projects and School Facilities, shared information about the work that has gone on since the committee last met. Ron and the design team met with Whatcom County staff for a pre-application meeting, where the county explains the various constraints that apply to the project, including required permits, setbacks, fire district requirements, height restrictions, environment reviews, etc. that we must comply with. We also talked with the City of Bellingham about a possible trail and park. We will work to see if we can find a trail alignment that works for both the City and the district. There will not be room for a park on the site, but we will be building a playground that includes hard and soft surface areas and play equipment. The playground will be available to the public during non-school hours.

Zach Ham, Dykeman architect, reminded the committee of the processes and work they've accomplished over the past 11 months including the Educational Specifications and Guiding Principles. He then shared the design team's recommended site and floor plan as well as several exterior and interior design images.

The site plan shows family drop-off/pick-up on Hollywood Avenue and the bus drop-off/pick-up on Redwood Avenue, creating the separation that is an important safety feature. While the covered play will have close adjacency to the drop-off, the play area will have separation from the classrooms. The garden is located to the west, and there will be a separate preschool play area off the preschool wing. Curbs, gutters and sidewalks will be part of the project on Redwood and Hollywood on one side of the streets along the frontage of the district's property. A large grass play field will be in the northwest corner of the site, and new play equipment will likely be installed as it is not possible to relocate the existing equipment. The district is trying to move towards more inclusive playgrounds so those with disabilities can more readily use the equipment.

The proposed floor plan shows a two-story building, with classrooms in clusters with extended learning spaces. Younger students (PK-1) will be on the lower floor and the older students (2-5) will be on the second floor. The plan includes two Pre-K classrooms, three classrooms per grade level with adjacent extended learning spaces, ancillary spaces for support staff and a full-size gymnasium. In addition, the plan reflects the space adjacencies the committee expressed as important during the planning process.

Ron noted that the images shown don't necessarily reflect the materials or colors that will be used in the final design.

Micah asked the group to take a moment to reflect on what was shared and then to share out with the larger group.

Comments, questions and wonders included:

- Love the design, not really complicated. Love that adjacencies provide easy access in and out of receiving, custodial, and kitchen.
- Hoping for acoustical treatment in the gym (there will be in the gym and in the cafeteria).
- The natural light is great. Love that you were able to integrate nature so well.
- Wondering about dedicated place to store the technology. (At this point no, as the move to 1:1 will create less of a need but Micah and his staff will work on meeting that need within the space provided.)
- Wondering about traffic patterns with three sets of stairs.
- Like that the restrooms are in good proximity to classrooms.
- Glad there is Pre-K outdoor play area.
- Proximity to gardens is nice.
- Custodial closets near bathrooms and cafeteria, well thought out.
- Like the operable wall between cafeteria, gym and stage.
- Love the bus drop off and parent drop off are two different spaces.
- Like the angle of the building. Foyer area, at certain times could be a bottle neck if the cafeteria and gym are leaving at the same time. Could it be too congested? (The design team will review this.)
- Should there be doors between all classrooms? (Doors eliminate wall space and allow sound from one space to another. Micah will have further discussion with his staff on this issue and provide direction to the design team before the community meeting).
- Why are portables shown? (It costs about \$30,000 to move a portable offsite so they will likely remain and can be used for a variety of things if not needed as classrooms).
- What will happen to the Alderwood Early Childhood Center (AECC)? (It will be demolished as that is where the new bus drop-off/pick-up will be located).

Micah thanked the group for their feedback and wondered if they were ready to see if there was consensus on the site and floor plans.

Ron clarified that if we do reach consensus, then this will be the floor plan and site plan for the new school, and there will be no large-scale changes, pending feedback the committee may receive at the neighborhood community meeting.

The committee expressed unanimous consent on moving forward with sharing the plans with the community at an upcoming meeting.

Ron indicated that the next step is to engage our neighborhood and community. We'll send a mailing out and share a presentation like what was shown today.

He also indicated that while there will likely not be any additional large group meetings, there will be some small group meetings that center on specific spaces like Special Education, etc. If people want to be part of those meetings, they should let Micah know.

Other information shared included that the annexation process will likely take 1 to 1 ½ years to complete and the goal is to open the new school in fall 2021.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.