

District Office Design Advisory Committee  
 Bellingham Public Schools  
 July 28, 2020

Attendees:

<b>Bellingham Public Schools:</b>	Jessica Sankey	Lauri McBeath-Davies
Dr. Greg Baker	Kristi Dominguez	Lisa Gilchrist
Steve Clarke – (Co-chair of DAC)	Kurt Gazow	Cindy Pearson
Jackie Brawley	Mike Copeland	Charisse Berner
Curtis Lawyer – (Co-chair of DAC)	Simone Sangster	Amanda Ingram
Bob Kuehl	Julie Denton	Kathryn Weilage
Jay Jordan		
<b>Other Participants:</b>		
Ryan Pflueger – Barkley Company	Jeff McClure – RMC Architects	Lori Walker, WGNW
Kim Lund – BPS Foundation	Allison Ross – RMC Architects	Anne Cunningham, WGNW
David Webster – Opportunity Council		

1. Introductions

- a. Committee co-chairs welcomed committee members opened up a discussion for any initial comments. Group logistics and processes specific to the DAC were reviewed.
  - Meeting minutes and presentation materials will be posted to the OneNote platform.

2. Lori Walker with The Walker Group NW shared research from a number of workplace experts that Design Advisory members commented on during a Zoom Chat. The following comments were noted:

- a. In reference to the COVID experience:
    - Working from home has encouraged taking breaks to get up and move more frequently.
  - b. In reference to buildings that act ‘generatively’ (encourage new relationships between staff) versus buildings that act ‘conservatively’ (conserving existing relationships between staff): :
    - The attraction of more open space (generative layout) is understandable. COVID will impact just how “open” spaces can be.
    - Shared space to connect with others in the office is desired.
    - Security will be important with the open plan spaces.
    - Collaborative areas for informal meetings/discussion are important to include.
  - c. In reference to how the physical environment can assist with knowledge transfer:
    - Some whiteboards have the technological ability to print board contents for better permanence and knowledge transfer.
- In reference to how the physical environment can assist with productivity: Our occupational/physical therapy staff have unique needs that will need to be considered, especially in a more open office environment.
  - Some employees are frequently on the phone, having a solution to control noise levels for would help minimize the impact to others in the area.



3. Visions and Key Goals Break-Out Groups:

- a. Committee members broke out into smaller groups via Zoom to review the vision and key goals for applicability and alignment with The Bellingham Promise.

Vision	A symbolic place that represents the investment the community has made in education and all that it stands for – creating knowledge in its citizens, building character, and preparing the next generation to take action in the world
Key Goals	1. Collective Commitment – we are stubborn in our goals and flexible in our methods; we work together to achieve our outcomes; we encourage all voices
	2. Community Inclusion – a welcoming space for our whole community
	3. Learning and Collaboration – learning from each other; great collaborative spaces
	4. Innovation and Flexibility – an environment that encourages trust building and diversity; an adaptable and flexible physical environment
	5. Health and Wellness – design choices that enhance physical and psychological health

- b. The following are representative comments from the breakout group discussions.

- Collective Commitment aligns with having a single entry to the space.
- Wayfinding will be important.
- Increased visibility in the space could cause interruptions, the layout of spaces will be important
- Distinctions between public, semi-public and private spaces will be important.
- Replace the word “stubborn” with something like persistent, adamant, determined etc.
- Who is the community that is defined in community inclusion? Adults/kids/all ages?
- Learning and collaboration – be sure to allow teams to work in their own space when they don’t want/need to collaborate
- The vision statement feels too formal and should better represent the Bellingham Promise
  1. Concern about the work “symbolic” seeming too monumental, perhaps start with “A space that embodies...”
  2. Replace the word “stubborn” with something like diligent, purposeful or intentional.
  3. Community Inclusion – how do we thoughtfully reflect other groups in our community, like the Lummi and Nooksack communities? This is a perfect goal to think about EDI (Equity, diversity, inclusion) and take it to the next level.
- Collective commitment is really about connecting people
- Community inclusion is important to encourage others to come and use the space, as a community resource
- Health and wellness is a great goal, it is important to encourage healthy choices through spatial design.



- Health and wellness - be mindful to create spaces that encourage movement (people are moving around much more now than before COVID)
  - Keep equity at the heart of what we do, it's a community space that we are providing
  - Community inclusion – How do we dedicate this building to the land that it sits on? (land acknowledgements)
- c. Additional Feedback from Zoom Chat:
- How can the Vision better align with The Bellingham Promise? Change “citizens” to “individuals” or “community”?
  - Vision feels too informal and not aligned to The Promise.
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- Adjacency + Bubble Diagram Break-Out Groups – Lori Walker shared three options for the location of departments within the New District office. The following comments reflect what each group shared about their discussions: Early Learning Center near the Main Entry
  - Print Shop fits well in the basement
  - The larger rooftop space of Option C is great
  - Shower and Locker facilities are best on the first floor near the entry
  - Having HR and Payroll on the ground floor is good, but the separation between them and the other functions is challenging
  - Prefers having public spaces and meeting spaces at the ground floor near the entry
  - OT/PT should be in one area of the building, not split between two spaces
  - Fitness and showers should be close together
  - Benefit of having the Early Learning Center neat the main entry
  - Caution around reception being isolated near the entry. They currently have support from the Communications team. Perhaps Family Engagement could provide this support.
  - The print shop can be a noisy working area, and has needs for ventilation and access to loading for deliveries. The print shop has a connection to Ed. Tech.
  - Having most/all staff on one floor would be great. Finance and HR could be on the first floor, but it would be nice to have the entire first floor as community/public space
  - Having the Meeting/PD space on the roof would require people moving throughout the space (security concerns, esp. after hours)
  - Fitness should be adjacent to the shower/locker space
  - It might be important to have >1 workroom per floor for printing and copying
  - The focus of the first floor should be on the value of customer service, which would put HR and payroll here, and locate the Print shop in the basement. Ed. Tech should also have a presence on the first floor
  - There is a strong adjacency between the Early Learning Center and the BPS Foundation space, both should be near the entry at the ground floor.
  - The meeting/PD space at the roof is great, and could be a rentable asset to the community.
4. Additional feedback received:
- a. Consider a Miyawaki-style Pocket Forest instead of garden space. Gardens require ongoing human and financial investment, and a pocket forest would be a low-overhead wildlife enhancement to the site.



- b. Nurses may have a need for a dedicated collaboration space at the District Office. As long as they each have an office space available in one of their schools, it's okay for them to not have a dedicated collaboration space, but they don't reliably have an office available in their schools.
- c. HR will need access to rooms suited for interviews.
- d. OT/PT has different needs than others. We make a lot of things that make noise, have smells, require lots of materials and storage. We need a home base to meet and a place to do our projects.

5. Next Steps

- a. In our next meeting in two weeks, we will look at site attributes, building location options.