

METHACTON HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS PLANNING COMMITTEE

Planning for Our Future

Subcommittee 7

Staff Recommendations

October 14, 2023 Session

SCOT ANALYSIS:

Discussion is two-fold: Feedback from the sub-committee AND analysis of staff feedback/survey results

Strengths

- What do you like about the Methacton High School campus/building? **It is used by the community. The pool is located on site. The turf field is a highlight.**
- What sets Methacton High School campus/building apart from other high school campuses/buildings that you are familiar with? **Admin offices are located throughout the building which adds to the accessibility and relationship building with students.**
- What advantages do students, parents, staff, and the community have with the Methacton High School campus/building? **There is a strong connection between school and community.**
- What other positive aspects can you list regarding the Methacton High School campus/building?

List the top 5 strengths identified by staff from the feedback results?

- **Connection to outdoors** (Breezeway, windows, pond, view, etc.)
- **Turf Field**
- **Having a Pool on campus** (Connection for students and community use)
- **The building is used by community** (Don't want to lose that connection.)
- **Offices are located throughout the building**

Challenges

- What do you not like about the Methacton High School campus/building? **It feels antiquated. The struggling HVAC system contributes to this feeling with poor air quality, noisy learning environments, and need for staff to empty dehumidifiers throughout the day. The large footprint and past renovation projects have made navigating the building a challenge; and some classrooms are in odd places that don't make sense. The auditorium is too small!**
- What factors or limitations of the Methacton High School campus/building do you believe detract from your ability or our student's ability to have an exceptional experience? **The HVAC system has created spaces that are musty and dank. Other spaces have water damage. Past projects have patched problems, but the current building no longer has enough space to create innovative learning spaces. Our students in the Life Skills classes require access to more. The needs presented by our English language learners continue to rise.**

- What disadvantages do students, parents, staff, and the community have with the Methacton High School campus/building? HVAC and lack of space contribute to a decreased learning environment
- What programs, services, or activities are limited by the Methacton High School campus/building? The music program, Life Skills, Special Education, English Language Learners, Tech Ed (on 2nd floor), people operating in offices that are former closets, People with mobility challenges
- What other challenging matters can you list regarding the Methacton High School campus/building?

List the top 5 challenges identified by staff from the feedback results?

Traffic Flow

- Inside with the halls
- Outside with parking and entrances

HVAC

Meeting Spaces for teachers and students

WIFI connectivity

Opportunities

- What advantages do students, parents, staff, and the community from other high schools, which you are familiar with, have that the Methacton High School campus/building does not have? Avon Grove’s campus was the preferred campus by those that took the tours. Access to outdoors, natural light, innovative learning spaces, school spirit, updated technology/connectivity, ability to offer unique electives that are similar to a Tech School experience
- What should the district consider when planning for future investments into the Methacton High School campus/building? We want to think of today’s students AND the needs of students fifty years from now. We want future generations to have an education that meets the needs of 21st Century learners. We don’t want to lose the connection with the community.
- Are there emerging technologies, school design improvements, safety enhancements or other building structures to accommodate programs/services not currently provided that should be considered in our future planning? We did not like all the glass found at Upper Merion; however, we liked the gathering spaces that encourage more of a collegial feel for students. It is important to have a space in the building that can hold ALL students at once. (Gym) The Auditorium should hold at least 2 grade levels. Parking lots have multiple entry points to help with traffic flow – with a separate lot for adults.

List all the opportunities identified by staff from the feedback results?

Create wider hallways

Increase safety

Fix ADA compliance concerns

Create a HUB to build community

Improve learning spaces

Threats

- What future challenges will impact the Methacton School District if investments into the high school campus/building are not made? We were curious about how many students elect to go to private/charter schools, because we may see a decrease in enrollment. Our students will fall behind the times compared to surrounding districts.

- What are some of the external forces preventing us from making improvements to our campus/building? **The township’s restrictions were discussed. We recognize cost of renovation vs. new construction is a factor, but we don’t want to spend money on big ticket items to “patch” the problems anymore.**
- Are there improvements that, if not implemented, could undermine the perceived value of our institution? **The HVAC is critical! Students will rise to the level they perceive to be present. Right now we are not able to provide certain programs, features, opportunities because the structure has limits.**

List all the threats identified by staff from the feedback results?

HVAC
Leaks/Mold
Township Regulations
Safety concerns with entrances, exterior cameras, personnel
Technology

Final Question:

What recommendations can you derive from the staff survey results? **Total of 5 are explained in the tables below.**

Top Teacher Survey Results	Top SCOT Results
HVAC Auditorium/Music Overall Appearance Locker Rooms/Gyms	HVAC Traffic Flow - Inside and Outside of Building 21st Century learning Spaces Safety of Building Overall – Inadequate Facility/Campus

Safety

What:

- Safety in building via main entrance
- Number of exterior doors is a concern & need alerts when doors are left open
- Footprint of building inside has many “hiding spots”
- Improved wifi-cell service
- Increased security presence

Impact

- Safer School
- Improved Mental Health of staff and students
- Possible increase in engagement and student achievement

Why:

- We are charged with keeping our students & staff safe (It is our #1 priority.)

How:

These things can be addressed through renovation OR in a new construction scenario.

- Install Lobby Guard at main entrance, East Wing & Athletics
- Section off community used locations from rest of building
- Ensure that all doors to classrooms open to code
- Improve Wi-Fi/cell connectivity
- Increase security personnel

21st Century Learning Spaces

What:

- Improved learning spaces for our students (Both inside and out)
 - Modern technology and connectivity
 - Flexible Seating
 - Visually appealing and safe

Impact

- Increased engagement, achievement and collaboration
- Reduce negative behaviors
- Create curricular opportunities that 21st century students need
- Increased attendance, enrollment, and staff retention
- Increased school spirit and positivity

Why:

- The High School is the flagship of the district.
- Creating a collaborative environment would align to life post-HS (work/college)
- The current set up is inadequate.
- We need to think and plan for students of the future!

How:

Some of these things can be addressed through renovation; however, a new construction could address all of them.

- Improved hallways and classrooms
- Consistent internet connectivity and charging stations
- Updated furniture
- Flexible and outdoor learning spaces
- General areas for collaboration

HVAC

What:

- Improved Air quality & Noise reduction with NEW HVAC throughout building

Impact

- Less absenteeism
- Possible increase in participation in Music program (band/chorus) due to improved air quality
- Increase attention/focus on instruction with less noise during instruction
- Staff satisfaction
- Free up resources as staff are currently emptying dehumidifiers during the day
- Positive student outcomes, overall

Why:

- We are charged with keeping our students & staff safe (It is our #1 priority.)
- The current HVAC could present health concerns, discomfort, and safety issues.
- The overall learning environment is impacted by the HVAC system.

How:

- **We believe a complete overhaul of the HVAC system is needed and would best be accomplished through new construction.**

Traffic Flow (Inside & Outside)

What:

- Congestion on campus
 - Traffic flow at drop-off, parking locations, few entry points for traffic
- Interior Concerns
 - Size of hallways (length and width)
 - Flow of building
 - Footprint of building

Impact

- Congestion causes a number of issues Inside & Outside
 - frustration and behaviors
 - anxiety about being late to class, or close proximity in crowded spaces
 - tardiness and missed instructional time
 - safety concerns
- Parking impacts the nearby community
 - Students parking on roads, church parking lots, etc.
 - Drop-off creates a bottleneck which makes it difficult for other cars to pass by the HS

Why:

- All of this impacts sanity, efficiency, culture, scheduling, and safety

How:

Some of these things can be addressed through renovation; however, a new construction could address all of them.

If renovating:

- Interior
 - Remove lockers to widen hallways
 - Connect on the 2nd floor to eliminate bottle neck
- Exterior
 - Create multiple entrances/exits on campus to main roads
 - Create a separate teacher parking lot away from main road and student traffic
 - Evaluate overall parking lot to ensure appropriate handicap parking

Inadequate Facility/Campus

What:

Campus and Building are antiquated and no longer meet the needs of current or future generations.

Impact

- The current campus and building limit opportunities and student achievement

Why:

- We have to invest in the needs of students now and 50 years from now

How:

We need our new campus to address:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditorium: Bigger and improved • Gym: seating for entire school • Pool: Remain on HS campus for student and community use • Music/Art: Upgraded • Life Skills/Autistic Support: Apartment program, transition support, work stations • Special Education: Teacher collaboration space and room for meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure accessibility (ADA compliant) • Plan for innovative electives/opportunities • Ensure reliable Wi-fi/cell service * • Create storage for school, athletics, teachers, facility (get rid of shed-city) • Move Tech-Ed to 1st floor • Provide enough parking so students are not parking in neighborhoods • Provide secure community access |
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning spaces/Collaboration spaces for students• Incorporate natural light• Include outdoor learning spaces for teachers and students• Add bleachers/seating at football field• Feature the Methacton brand throughout the campus to increase school spirit and connectivity *• Add a school store *	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve outside traffic flow• Improve safety/security on campus• Build a field house for stadium that includes locker rooms/bathrooms• Remove lockers in hallways• Improve/Increase cameras in interior/exterior of school * <p>Note: * indicates it can also be addressed now</p>
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