



**Strategic Facilities Committee Meeting #6  
Garrett College  
Garrett Information Enterprise Center, Room 111/112  
687 Mosser Road  
McHenry, MD 21541**

**Minutes of June 18, 2019 Meeting #6 / Planning Workshop**

Facilitator: David Lever

Committee Members Present: Jim Browning  
Patrick Damon  
Karen DeVore  
Tracie Miller  
Kevin Null  
Carissa Rodeheaver  
Bill Swift  
Richard Wesolowski  
Duane Yoder

Dr. Lever called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. Mrs. Alison Sweitzer, Director of Finance, was also in attendance for part of the meeting to share information with the committee members.

**I. Introductions**

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Dr. David Lever, Facilitator, welcomed the committee members.

**II. Minutes**

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The minutes from SFC Meeting #5 were distributed to the members. The committee will take action on the minutes at the next SFC meeting/workshop on June 20, 2019.

**III. Research Subcommittees: Status Updates**

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Each of the subcommittees provided an update on the status of their research. Mrs. DeVore inquired about possible time for subcommittees to meet if time permitted during the two day workshops.

The grade band subcommittee met and emailed related articles. They are still pulling information together.

The alternative education subcommittee members collected most of the surveys and are beginning to compile the responses. The principals stated that most surveys were distributed successfully. Mr. Swift spoke about the Antietam Academy, an alternative education high school in Washington County. He stated the school is open to visits by the committee members to view the school and campus if they chose to do so. The students are placed in Antietam

Academy due to discipline issues but can still participate in some of the technical school courses, as the two schools are on the same campus.

Committee members wanted to know what happens when students leave school because of discipline issues and go on to home school. What is the effect of the home school instruction? The studies have shown that many students in Antietam Academy have done better because they are still in a school setting and integrated with the technical school.

The community schools’ subcommittee has not been successful in meeting yet and have not established a chairperson. Individual members are pulling research however and looking at the unique qualities of our school system compared with other counties and will include this information in their research.

**IV. Reports**

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**a. Planning Objectives and Impacts Report**

Dr. Lever shared the planning objectives and impacts report. He reminded the committee that the weight they place on the impacts will help to gauge the rankings and will assist them in determining the SFC’s major planning objectives. The committee should not necessarily be limited by the budget constraints to look only at the most practical projects. The committee will narrow the focus on what needs to be done, and will then determine what further research needs to be completed. The needs of the school system are widespread, with some schools needing significant improvements and/or renovations. The challenges the committee members face will be on how they should make their decisions. What is the most important objective? The committee will be speaking for the community, therefore it cannot rely solely on the members’ personal values, but also on community values. It is also to be noted that whatever the committee comes up with in terms of recommendations will likely not please all community members, but it is simply not possible to do everything the school system needs.

Dr. Lever reminded the members that there is a rational process behind the committee’s research and rankings. The committee members were asked to determine their top 3 important objectives. The chart below shows the results of this informal survey:

Committee Members	Objectives								
	Quality of Education	Improved Education Environment	Safety and Security	Buildings	Space Usage	Educational Offerings / Special Programs	Community	State Funding Formula	Enrollments
Carissa	X	X	X						
Bill	X		X	X					
Kevin	X		X	X					
Karen	X		X			X			
Duane	X						X	X	
Jim	X	X					X		
Rich	X				X	X			
Tracie	X		X			X			
Patrick	X					X			X

Quality of education was the top objective of the committee members. The committee discussed the many reasons for this. They stated that nearly everything on the list of objectives refers to the quality of education. Committee

members discussed concerns with maintaining high quality of education including enrollments, building issues and building inequities.

The committee discussed the financial constraints which prohibit the school system from offering equity among the schools. An example is Northern Middle School, a recently renovated school with new classrooms and adequate spaces, versus Southern Middle School, which was built with open space classrooms and has many building limitations. The members also discussed how to measure the quality of education, including test scores, surveys, college enrollments, etc.

The committee expressed concern that Garrett County students don't have all of the opportunities that students in other counties have because of the budget constraints and geography. They even stated that they don't feel that in the current environment Garrett County students can compete with other students in the state. They also discussed facility constraints on specific programs, for example, Crellin Elementary can have a barn beside the school with livestock for agricultural lessons, but Grantsville Elementary is not permitted to have farm animals due to city restrictions.

The committee members also discussed that the communities have some responsibility for the success of the students as well. Some students face certain hurdles that the school system and the communities can assist them to overcome in becoming successful.

The committee chose to look at in detail at facility constraints and educational inequities among the schools. They must consider the financial impact on each of these topics.

The committee discussed the inequities between the north and the south. Inequities discussed included student readiness and wellness scores, which are better on the northern end and could be attributed to more Head Start programs and the in-school daycare programs at Route 40 and Friendsville Elementary Schools. Addiction problems and suspensions are worse on the southern end. The committee discussed possibly focusing on the southern end and providing more resources to deal with these types of issues.

The committee also discussed possible solutions including redistricting and/or grade band configurations and the challenges with implementing either of those changes. Possible challenges include longer bus routes, grandfathering families, and keeping younger students separate from the older students. The committee discussed the challenges of running Swan Meadow School, a school for 40 students which doesn't meet all of the State requirements in regards to curriculum and program offerings. Some members discussed looking at all of the facilities and their needs and determining whether certain schools should be closed or consolidated so that more resources for uniform program offerings are made possible for all students. Should the Board close an elementary school and renovate another elementary school (both on the southern end), so that all of the students have the best facilities and educational offerings? The committee members stated that they must take the emotion out of their decision making throughout the process and remember they are ultimately making recommendations that will be in the best interest of the students and the school system.

#### **b. Adequacy Matrix**

To pursue the committee's interest in comparing the educational adequacy of the schools, Dr. Lever developed a matrix which listed the schools and the necessary architectural features needed to support the educational programs, including outdoor items. The committee discussed each of the features and rated them for each school. The three-level ranking was color coded with a key (ex. Green means that the facility has the educational feature in reasonably good condition; yellow means that the feature is present but needs improvement; and red means that the feature is either missing or is present but is deficient; in addition, some features are NA – not applicable – to a

particular school, for example playgrounds in the secondary schools). The matrix shows that not all of the buildings are equitable. It also shows which schools may need the most in regards to improvements.

**ADEQUACY MATRIX**

**Color Code:**  **Good**      **Needs improvement**      **Deficient/Absent**

June 2019	Architectural																	Outdoor											
	Regular classrooms	Resource rooms	Science	STEM/STEAM/Robotics	Technology	Media center	Cafeteria	Physical education	Auditorium	Music	Art	Administration	Health suite	Itinerant staff	Special education	Alternative education	Pre-school space	Before and after school	Community space	CTE	Support	Toilets	Storage	Security	Playing fields	Playground	Parking lots/bus loops	Env., Instruct' areas	Natural areas
<b>RANK: Adequacy</b>																													
<b>North:</b>																													
Accident ES									NA																				
Friendsville ES									NA																				
Grantsville ES									NA																				
Route 40 ES									NA																				
Northern MS									NA								NA	NA	NA								NA		
Northern HS									NA								NA	NA	NA	NA							NA		
Hickory EEC																													
<b>South:</b>																													
Broad Ford ES									NA																				
Crellin ES									NA																				
Yough Glade ES									NA																				
Swan Meadow School									NA																				
Southern MS									NA								NA	NA	NA								NA		
Southern HS									NA								NA	NA	NA	NA							NA		

The color coded ratings were based on current uses of the rooms/spaces in the buildings and if the space is available for the purpose of the subject. After the chart was completed, the committee looked at what it indicates about each of the facilities. Ex. Broad Ford Elementary School has a tremendous amount of work that would need to be done to move the rooms/spaces into the green ranking. Many of the facilities in the southern region have a lot of red and yellow rankings, therefore the committee needs to look even further to see if a renovation is necessary or if another option should be looked at. Another example is Crellin Elementary which has a lot of red spaces. If additional portables were added to the school, would that turn some of their rooms/programs to green and open up seats for students attending an overcrowded school?

**IV. Facility Analysis as of 6/18/2019**

**Alison Sweitzer**

Mrs. Alison Sweitzer, Director of Finance, discussed the facility analysis report which she updated for the workshop. The report shows each of the school’s enrollments, revised SRC (State Rated Capacity), gross square footage, revenue generated by the facility, revised excess cost due to low capacity, and the net change in excess cost (due to the recent changes in the SRC). She explained that the SRC means the number of students that the Maryland Public School Construction Program determines that an individual school has the physical capacity to enroll. The SRC standards have recently changed in regards to how many students are considered in each instructional space, and certain rooms (Ex. Computer Rooms) are now included in the calculations. Mr. Swift stated that his staff had to re-measure each classroom and space in the buildings and resubmit this data to MDP. After the submission, the State provided a revised SRC report for GCPS. The report showed that some schools were significantly under capacity.

The State utilizes the SRC as a guideline to ensure schools are being fully utilized. They use this guideline when determining which capital projects to fund. Ex. If Southern Middle School needs a full renovation

the school should be operating at least 70 - 75% capacity. The state would look at the 49.3% and perhaps not agree to supporting the project. Dr. Lever stated the SRC is used by the State as a guideline, not a standard, and since each school project is looked at individually, representatives from Garrett County could speak to the IAC regarding the challenges faced by the school system (building issues, low enrollment, geography, etc.). He also stated that if school buildings are being utilized by other nonprofit or governmental organizations and there is an MOU for this usage, this information may reduce the SRC and should be shared with the IAC. Route 40 Elementary School's SRC was calculated based on treating all of the building space as instructional, and some of the space could have been removed from the capacity based on the Head Start / Daycare MOU building usage.

Committee members inquired about the rough cost per square foot to run a building (heat, cool, clean, etc). The estimated cost as provided by the IAC was \$8/sq foot. Some buildings with low capacity could possibly close off rooms ("mothball"), however, some of the costs will still occur in maintaining these spaces within the building.

Committee members discussed that if certain schools were not at full capacity, could they offer that space to community organizations? Examples include library, community centers, retirement organizations, etc.

Committee members also discussed deferred maintenance projects. Mrs. Sweitzer stated that there were a large number of 'emergency' projects which nearly exceed the scheduled projects. There are some aging building systems that are starting to fail and will continue to fail if not replaced. Because of this, more funding was allocated in the FY2020 budget to cover these possible costs. Dr. Lever suggested that the word 'emergency' should be limited to projects that address true emergencies, and that 'unscheduled' might be more appropriate for projects that are unbudgeted but have a lower urgency.

## **V. Reports (continued)**

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### **b. Adequacy Matrix**

Dr. Lever asked the committee members to look at the schools with red boxes. He stated that the chart clearly shows inequities among the facilities in the school system. He stated if you included the community input to evaluate these schools, it would get very complex. The committee must look at the educational excellence of the schools. Committee members that work for the school system stated that educational equity is the driving force / theme for Dr. Karen Salmon, Maryland State Superintendent, and that she is demanding that all superintendents enforce this in each of their school systems.

Dr. Lever indicated that while the chart shows inequities by the presence of the red cells, not all facility inadequacies are equally urgent. He listed the top objectives: safety/security, health, educational mandate, educational best practice, educational desires, code mandates, and community impact. He asked the committee to rank them on a 1 – 5 scale, and then applied these rankings to each of the architectural and outdoor areas of the facilities. The results are shown in the modification of the adequacy chart:

