



LYNDEN

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Tradition + Pride + Excellence

Lynden School District Planning – Overview

November 2017

What are the plans for the current Middle School Property on Main Street once students move to the new school on the Line Road?

To address facility crowding and space issues as a result of increased enrollment the current Middle School facilities will be repurposed to house district programs and administrative space for central office staff. This will enable the District to consolidate district services, provide needed space for pre-school and early childhood classrooms, meeting space for training, professional development and Board meetings, as well as space for programs such as the Family Community Services and the Grounds and Maintenance department.

When repurposed, facilities at the current middle school site will provide space for:

- **Early childhood classrooms and pre-school space** - Currently we have three pre-school classrooms and an ECAP program spread out over the school district. We have enough requests for pre-school program slots that to add additional classrooms if space was available. The plan is to provide 7 pre-school classrooms at the current MS facility.
- **Family community Services (FCS)** – Currently our FCS program provides support to many families for a variety services. Locating FCS at the MS facility provides a central location with enough space to effectively provide the services families rely on throughout the year.
- **District Grounds and Maintenance** – The District grounds department and equipment storage facility is currently located at the MS campus. Grounds will continue to be located here with the possibility of expanding to include the maintenance department as well. There is space for a maintenance shop and work space that currently does not exist.
- **Administrative Office Space** – Currently most central office staff are located on the high school campus. Administrative staff is also located in other facilities across the district. It will be beneficial to have one location for all central office staff and support services. In addition, the MS Library will serve as a meeting and training space for large groups and school board meetings. Currently we do not have any space available in the district
- **Extended School Day Activities** – It is possible that space can be utilized to support before and after school programs. We have had discussion with the Boys and Girls Club about their interest in leasing space.

What about Judson Hall and the Gymnasiums?

- **Judson Hall** – Judson Hall will continue to serve as the District’s performance venue for large events such as concerts, drama productions, and other community activities, until a suitable replacement of like size and function is provided. Analysis of Judson hall during previous facility studies have indicated the needed improvements will cost more than a new facility, and would not include the necessary facility space to meet program needs. Judson Hall will require seismic and structural improvements to bring it up to current structural codes and to meet the identified program needs. Previous facility committees have recommended a new performance facility be included when improvements are made at LHS as it would be connected to the actual programs the facility would support and serve. However, for the time being Judson Hall will continue to be used in the manner it currently serves.
- **Gymnasiums** – There are two gymnasiums at the current middle school facility. Currently the gyms are used for daily academic, physical education, and co-curricular programs as well as community recreational activities. Once students move to the new Middle School the gyms will continue to be used for after school practices and games as well as community recreational activities. Gym space for practices and games is already challenging so we will continue to utilize these spaces for co-curricular and community recreational activities.

What will the District do with the Glenning Street property and the playfields behind the current middle school?

- **Glenning Street** – The school district is exploring options to surplus Glenning Street and use the revenue to pay for the renovations on the middle school facilities. This property is 4 acres, which is too small for a typical school site. Generally, a school needs about 10 acres in order to have enough space for a school facility, staff, parent, and event parking, bus drop off and pick up, playground area, play fields and room for expansion when needed.
- **District Dilemma** - When the most recent capital bond was passed in April 2015 the District communicated that it would use the proceeds from the sale of the Glenning street property to pay for the necessary upgrades to the middle school facilities to house district office staff and pre-school classrooms. Recently, some community members have inquired about keeping this property as open space or a park. While the District recognizes the value of parks and open space in the community we also have a need to utilize resources to the maximum benefit of our students and stretch our limited resources. The challenge for the school district is that it is not in the business of operating parks or other community activities that are not directly related to the main mission of education. And because this property no longer has any direct use for education purposes the Glenning Street property is considered surplus property. The other dilemma for the school district regarding this as property is that without revenue from its sale to provide for the improvements needed at the current middle school facilities the district would need to propose a bond or levy to fund these improvements. Therefore, the District will be offering this property for sale in the near future.
- **Playfields north of the Middle School Facilities** – The school district will also no longer need the playfields behind the current middle school. The football, baseball, and soccer fields will not be used for school activities or sport teams’ practices or games. Therefore, this property will also be considered surplus property and when sold will provide resources to make upgrades to the current middle school facilities for early childhood classrooms, district office space, and other district programs.

What about the long-term plan to address growth and increased enrollment?

Short Term Needs – The Lynden School District has experienced substantial growth over the past 7 years. Increasing from 2578 full time students in 2011-12 to close to 3100 students in 2016-17, a total increase of about 20%. In response to this growth and the age and condition of district schools a number of facility related committees as well as a state funded study and survey has analyzed, evaluated, and prioritized the facility needs necessary to address the growth in student population and the needed improvements to aging facility structures and systems. This resulted in the passing of a capital bond to build two new schools and the develop of a long-term Capital Facility Plan.

Short term and Long Term Needs:

- **Lynden High School** - The most recent Facility Committee (2016) identified the High School as highest priority need for improvements, upgrades and additional space. Currently the High School houses over 800 students in a space originally designed for 500. Over the years classroom space has been added but common space such as the cafeteria, student services, administration and counseling, library and others has remained the same. The high school needs to add space to serve between 1000 and 1200 students. This would include a performance space to replace Judson Hall. The committee recommended to the School Board that a bond be proposed to voters in the next two years.
- **A New Elementary School** – Enrollment trends indicate we will need a new elementary school within 5-7 years, if the growth in Lynden continues at current rates. In 2017 the District conducted an enrollment study to examine trends utilizing a number of different models. Taking a conservative approach, elementary enrollment, already exceeding practical capacity at elementary schools will reach a crisis by 2024. Currently 9 portable classrooms house students at two elementary schools. The District will continue to provide classrooms by adding portables, but the common spaces (gym, library, offices, student services, music etc.) will become stretched beyond function and capacity. The District has space adjacent to the new Middle School to construct a new elementary school.
- **Land for a New School Site** – In order to plan for future growth (20 years and beyond) securing land for a new school site in the future would be prudent. Most likely this would be a second middle school and/or another elementary school. A plat of land between 20 and 30 acres would be an appropriate size to house either one or both schools and protect against rising property costs. Purchasing land for a school site soon could save significant money in the future.
- **Capital Facilities Plan** – The District has updated the Capital Facility Plan to include the most recent enrollment study, community demographics and development projections, Facility Committee recommendations, and emerging needs throughout the district based on annual maintenance and operations standards. The Capital Facility Plan is available on the District Website or a paper copy can be provided by calling the District Office at 360-354-4443.
- **Challenges to Long Term Planning** – Any long-term plan based on a future projection is subject to changing conditions. Enrollment projections do not ensure that the projection will become actual students. Therefore, the Capital Facility Plan, which is dependent on enrollment projections and a number of community and economic considerations, will cause the plan to be amended to meet changing conditions, and modified as actual conditions are determined.