

**CAPE ELIZABETH SCHOOL DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

December 5, 2018
6:30PM Cape Elizabeth High School Library

Committee Members Present:

Dr. Donna Wolfrom	Superintendent
Matt Sturgis	Town Manager
Jamie Garvin	Town Council Chair Elect
Valerie Deveraux	Town Council
Catherine Messmer	Business Manager
Perry Schwarz	CESD Director of Facilities
Peter Esposito	CESD Food Director
Susana Measelle Hubbs	School Board Chair
Heather Altenburg	School Board Vice Chair
Kimberly Carr	School Board
Jeffrey Shedd	CEHS Principal
Jeff Thoreck	CEHS Athletic Director
Katherine Bock	CEHS Science Teacher
Christine Marshall	CEHS Theater Director
Elizabeth Mylorie	CEHS Special Education Teacher
Carolyn Young	CEHS Library & Instructional Technology Specialist
Troy Eastman	CEMS Principal
Steve Price	CEMS Teacher/Performance Director
Caitlin Ramsey	CEMS Music Teacher
Jason Manjourides	PCES Principal
Erin Taylor	PCES Nurse
Jill Abrahamsen	Community Member/Parent
Peter Anderson	Community Member
Carla Bryant	Community Member/Parent
DJ Nelson	Community Member/Parent
Tim Thompson	Community Member
Maya Nelson	CEMS Student
Joe Clancy	CEHS Student
Liv Cochran	CEHS Student
Aidan Lee	CEHS Student
Max Patterson	CEHS Student
Piper Strunk	CEHS Student
Julia Thoreck	CEHS Student
Calen Colby	Colby Company Engineering
Austin Smith	Scott Simons Architects

Public Present:

Robert Barton

Tom Dunham
Lauren Glennon
Kevin Justh
Samantha Labrie
Terri Patterson
Janet Villiotte
Regina Wilson
Jana Zimmerman

Welcome and Introduction:

- Dr. Wolfrom welcomed attendees and reiterated that the charge of the committee is to determine whether or not a Needs Assessment should be recommended to the School Board for the FY20 school budget.

Approval of November 28, 2018 Minutes:

- Tim Thompson made the motion to approve.
- Peter Esposito seconded the motion.
- The committee unanimously voted to approve.

Review of Second Meeting:

No comments were made.

Tours Lead by CEHS Students — Joe Clancy, Liv Cochran, Aidan Lee, Max Patterson, Piper Strunk, and Julia Thoreck — and CEHS/CESD Staff — Katherine Bock, Peter Esposito, Christine Marshall, Elizabeth Mylorie, Steve Price, and Carolyn Young:

- Attendees separated into six groups and visited six different locations with the CEHS students as their guides. Each group spent approximately ten minutes at each station before returning to the library for committee discussion.

Station 1 — Maine Entrance

- Mr. Schwarz met the group here and touched on the exterior of the building by mentioning that it has not received any updates since it was built in 1968. As a result, the building looks old and the ramp to front entrance does not meet ADA compliance because it is too steep and does not provide rest-stops every 30' as required by law.
- The security of the entrance is ideal and what should be in place at PCES and CEMS.

- The greatest issue of frustration for Mr. Schwarz has to do with the VCT flooring. It is the least expensive flooring to install, but over its lifespan it becomes the most expensive product to maintain at about \$6.37 a square foot per year. Cape Elizabeth School District has approximately 200,000 square feet of VCT flooring which means over \$1 million to maintain the floor in summer maintenance alone. This is represented by the cost of stripper applied at the beginning of each summer, the six coats of wax applied, and labor required to do this. There are other options that cost more to install, but cost very little to maintain. Concrete was suggested as a viable alternative.
- The 9" x 9" tile flooring found in the robotics lab; half of the second floor; and in the closets in PCES & CEMS, has asbestos. While the flooring is "safe" because it is sealed and encapsulated with wax, they become a hazard if the tiles start to break. Therefore, it would be best to change this tile during any renovation work.

Station 2 — Science Classrooms 319 & 320

- Ms. Bock met the group in Room 319, which is Mr. Worthley's science room, because it demonstrates what an adequately furnished lab should look like. In Room 319 there is ample table space for note taking; every two students have their own lab stations with electricity, gas, plumbing, and storage for equipment; there is extra counter space for the teacher to set up lab projects; there are four large sinks; two exits (which is safety compliant) from the room in the event of an emergency; safety shower eye-wash; and ample space for the teacher.
- However, in Room 320, Ms. Bock explained that her room it is smaller with no extra tables to separate lab work from classwork. There is no electricity or proper plumbing available within her classroom, which means that Ms. Bock can either postpone or not due certain lab assignments when Room 319 is not in use. Ultimately, the curriculum is limited by the condition of the room. There is only one exit from the room, which does not meet safety code. There is no safety equipment, such as an eye-wash shower.

Station 3 — Cafeteria

- Mr. Esposito greeted the tour and explained that the flow for serving lunch is impeded by the large counters that separate the salad bar from the tables and the two cash registers inadequately located due to improper power supplies. On a typical day, there are three lunch periods and depending on the schedule there can be up to 250 students coming through the cafeteria in one lunch period in a very small area to serve and pay.
- The cafeteria includes an area that was intended to be a "senior lounge" space that would provide a quiet place for study during lunch. However, it does not provide quiet as it is not separated from the rest of the cafeteria.

- The cafeteria has round tables (instead of the long tables which exist at CEMS/PCES), which Mr. Esposito believes is more spacious, has more comfortable seating and better sound control.
- Within the kitchen, the deli sandwich and hot lunch is undersized., which adds to congestion. The area where dirty trays and dishes are placed by students only offers one door single-rack dishwasher for 500 students. This makes it very hard to keep up with trays and dishes.
- The walk-in fridge and freezer is very small and half the size of the PCES/CEMS walk-in and as a result, extra food from CEHS has to be stored at PCES/CEMS.
- The stock room is a perfect size and has been updated and is really functional now.
- Staff break room is very small and located adjacent to the facilities.
- The food delivery/service door is located within the kitchen, but it has no buffer between the kitchen and the outdoors and no security. It introduces more people, germs, and outdoor elements to the cooking area.
- There is only one hand-washing sink in the kitchen, there should be another closer to the cook. Salad bar prep area only has a sink — with no countertop.

Station 4 — Stage Entrance of Theater

- Ms. Marshall and Mr. Price brought the group to the stage through the “green room” which is where performers gather during a performance. Ms. Marshall pointed out all the curtains used on the stage which are not only extremely worn, torn and partially missing, but also not fire compliant. There is no intercom system between the booth and the backstage — which is standard practice. As a result, students must run down a long school hallway to communicate with the stage. There is wiring for an audio cable, but the system has been taken out.
- The stage itself needs to be resurfaced. There is a hole on the stage which poses a significant danger to performers. The electrical cords and outlets on the stage are taped down and not in an appropriate or safe spot. The theater is not air-conditioned.
- Mr. Price and students have been testing all lighting equipment and have determined which lights are no longer functional.
- The stage shop where props are made has a sink, but it does not work. Every shop must have a sink.
- There are no dressing rooms assigned to male and female in the green room. There is water leakage.

Station 5 — Life Skills Classroom 202

- Ms. Mylorie met the group in Room 202, which is where students with special needs and/or disabilities have classes that focus on functional skills — personal hygiene, cooking, reverse mainstream, laundry, showering — depending on their IEP requirements. The lights in the room are covered by sheets because they make sounds that emit high sounds that impact student's with sensory issues. The students also seem to do better with lower lighting. The heating system does not work properly — it is either too hot or too cold. Students and teachers must wear down coats during the winter months.
- The same lights are used throughout the school and emit the same sounds, limiting where some students with special needs can feel comfortable.
- There are three learning-center rooms where students go to work on specific goals on their IEPs. Each room is small and filled to capacity. The other rooms used by speech and language therapists, psychologist, and social workers have no natural light or fresh air. The occupational therapist's room has no ventilation which means that only a few students at one time can use the space.

Station 6 — Library

- Ms. Young met the group and explained that thanks to a CEEF grant, the library recently received some updates that provided lower and mobile shelving units and tables with wheels so that the library space can easily be transformed to suit a variety of situations. Two smaller rooms were also installed via the CEEF grant that allow for private audio-visual work. There is a long hallway that serves as the entry to the library — which is difficult to secure during a lockdown situation and also visually unwelcoming to students. The heat within the library is also typically too hot during the winter — due to climate control issues throughout the school. Storage for the library is inadequate and during lockdown drills, the storage room also serves as the lockdown room — which becomes very tight and packed with students. The overall limit to the library during school hours is 30 students.

Comments from the Public:

- Ms. Villiotte mentioned that the communication and email information has been great, including the detail of the minutes. She is wondering how to get information to the broader public. Can it be shared on the town website under Hot Topics? Also, she was wondering what will come of all the information at the end of these meetings. How will it be synthesized? Will there be a report to share with the public as early as possible? Also requested that the school website be improved so that it is easier for the public access the information coming from this committee.
- Dr. Wolfrom reminded everyone of that charge of the committee is to view and discuss challenges in the physical buildings and then to decide if we want to go forward with a needs assessment which may reveal more needs and priorities.

- Mr. Garvin commented that one of the purposes of this committee is to provide a more exposed view and a larger cross section of voices which could justify why the Needs Assessment expense is included in the School Board budget — if it is indeed ultimately included for FY20.
- Ms. Villiotte followed by saying that there is a Needs Assessment Committee to determine the need for a Needs Assessment Study.
- Mr. Garvin added that while it might seem an odd process, it is important to take these initial steps since there will be no state funding for any renovations. The money will be coming from the local taxpayers.
- Mr. Sturgis said that he would put information from the Needs Assessment Committee on the town website under “Hot Topics.”
- Ms. Measelle Hubbs mentioned that The Cape Courier has included information on the committee and how the public can access minutes and videos. She also agreed that it would be a good idea that the committee produce a final report once it has determined whether or not a recommendation for a needs assessment will be made to the School Board.

Committee Discussion:

- Mr. Thompson complimented Susana on her notes and minutes. Then he discussed that there seems that there are things that need to be fixed “tomorrow” — like torn curtains, broken floor, intercom (referring to the theater in the high school), etc., that are lower ticket items. He then asked if it was the purview of the committee to create stages of high, medium, and low priority? He brought up the example of spending \$1,200,000 a year to maintain flooring in the district — and devoting a certain amount of years to finish a replacement in order to cut the maintenance cost. He wishes that these things could be addressed tonight.
- Mr. Schwarz said that he feels the same way. It’s much like owning your own home, you have a set budget and you can only do what you can afford — despite seeing everything that needs attention. During the winter, his practice is to be much more cautious with spending because there can be more surprises in the colder months. Near the end of the fiscal year, he can consider paying for things like the theater curtains.
- Ms. Abrahamsen asked about a timeline for the study and said that there seems to be different levels of priorities. Will priorities be proposed through the study? How will finance effect the what and how? Will it be through a big bond or pieces?
- Mr. Colby answered that how there are different levels of studies that one can do. Originally, they proposed a very comprehensive study. Currently, the progress of the study will depend on the

financing decisions ultimately made — will it be one large bond or broken down into smaller bonds?

- Dr. Wolfrom added that if the committee agrees to recommend a Needs Assessment to the School Board, the cost of the Needs Assessment could then potentially be included in the FY20 budget. There would then be another committee to look at the needs assessment report to make decisions on timing and funding. There is a very specific timing for applying for bonds.
- Ms. Deveraux was curious about whether or not the budget currently includes extra funds for emergencies like safety issues or non-compliant issues. Do we have money right now for emergencies?
- Mr. Schwarz said that there is no line item for emergencies in the budget, but there is always a lot of work done in the summer. Ramps are a new topic because Perry happened to notice them recently, so they are new on the radar. He says he does plan for things like that.
- Ms. Deveraux said that it seems like there are a few issues that require not a lot of money that need to be chipped away at.
- Mr. Schwarz explained how expensive things are by giving the example of a handle for just one door costing \$400. He says the money goes fast.
- Ms. Deveraux asked who is responsible for the lack of safety equipment in the labs.
- Mr. Schwarz explained that teachers need to communicate with him so that he knows about it. Teachers don't always share what is wrong because the issue may have been there for so long. He encouraged teachers to tell him their needs and concerns so he can try to help.
- Mr. Nelson asked if the committee decides to approve the needs assessment, he is wondering if the scope has been decided.
- Dr. Wolfrom answered that we are waiting for the proposals from Colby Co. and believes that it will be ready by January.
- Ms. Zimmerman mentioned that there are smart students at CEHS looking for their senior transition projects and could possibly help alleviate costs by working with Colby Co. if that is possible.
- Mr. Colby said that they would love to involve the students on every level. "We are all about that!"
- Mr. Anderson talked about the nature of the study and the importance of explaining what the study does and doesn't include.

- Mr. Garvin asked Ms. Villiotte about non-student, non-parent community and wanted to know if she thought we should have an open house day. How could communication with that group be most effective?
- Ms. Villiotte said that while the meetings and minutes are great, it doesn't compare to student and teacher comments. Visuals are worth so much more than words. South Portland organized tours for the public many different times and days to hit all demographics for buy-in. She suggested outreach at the library, community center, fitness center - especially where elderly people and community members outside of the school department are located. She said there is more engagement that can be done. Better to bring people in early to avoid the contention from last year.
- Ms. Patterson echoed Ms. Villiotte's comments and wants to add to them. "We missed the boat last year somehow." Each facilitator talked about things that are dangerous and community members have pointed out their concerns. Mr. Schwarz shared that "They haven't dinged us yet," but it is a matter of time. All issues are big issues, and it is "shame that this has been postponed a year. These are real issues and can't wait another year." She believes that we can do better than South Portland in taking several shots at getting this funded.
- Mr. Colby said as a resident of Cape Elizabeth, he is committed to having Colby Co. attend any and all public education information sessions. He is invested in having Cape remain one of the top schools in the state. He wants good schools in the town where he lives. They are there to help.
- Mr. Smith added that the conversation is not just about bricks and mortar, but an in-depth interview with faculties, students, and parents on how could this facility better support your missions? Also a report based on sound empirical principles. Using the CEHS library as an example, what is the target of volumes per student in comparison with peer schools.
- Ms. Taylor wondered if the needs assessment can also look at the outside grounds. Commented that wheelchairs don't have easy access to athletic fields, the High School. She commented on the safety of the playground and asked about the maintenance and upkeep.
- Mr. Colby and Mr. Smith answered, Yes! The outside is a part of the assessment.
- Ms. Abrahamsen brought up another concern about Middle School students being so close to Scott Dyer during recess. She said it scares her with drivers so close, maybe driving too fast and causing an accident.
- Dr. Wolfrom said that the next meeting will be held in CEHS library. She added that Ms. Measelle Hubbs would try to compile photos of comparable districts and find out if those school renovations were state funded or tax payer funded. She talked about a big bond that just recently passed in Yarmouth. The next meeting will be mostly conversational, where to from here?, next steps, etc and a review from Colby Company. January 9 will conclude with the recommendation from the committee. Also, ways to get info to the public and get public into the schools for tours.

- Ms. Carr asked if the proposal from Colby Company would be ready prior to the January 9th meeting: hoped to have the proposal by January 9th.
- Mr. Colby said that they are hoping to have it to the district by Christmas break.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, January 9th, 6:30PM - 8:30PM at CEHS Library.

Adjourn:

8:35PM