

Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200

201 North Scoville Avenue · Oak Park, IL 60302-2296

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Dr. Joylynn Pruitt-Adams
DATE: November 15, 2018
RE: Imagine Work Group Facilities Master Plan Recommendation

BACKGROUND

After the defeat of a District 200 (D200) facilities referendum in November 2016, the D200 Administration and Board decided to create a citizen-led committee to undertake a thorough assessment of the facilities needs at Oak Park and River Forest High School (OPRFHS) with the charge to create a comprehensive, long-term facilities master plan.

A master plan is not a construction project where design and financing of every portion is done at the start. Instead, a master plan is a living document that should be reviewed and modified every few years as the impact of early projects is assessed, school needs change, and funding becomes available.

Acceptance of the plan means the Board accepts the recommended Facilities Master Plan, which is different from approving the plan. By accepting the Long Term Facilities Master Plan, the Board is accepting the identified facility needs and is not locked into a financial commitment. Once accepted, the Facilities Master Plan becomes the Board's. At that point, the Board of Education has the latitude to then decide what portion of the plan to implement and when, along with how to fund that portion.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Over the past 16 months, the Imagine Work Group has conducted a rigorous, needs-driven research process that resulted in the prioritized list of needs as outlined in the report. The process focused on student learning and equity in the context of facility impact. The process resulted in recommendations tied to:

- Student learning spaces
- Inefficiency from decades of piecemeal construction
- Connection and community
- Equity, along several dimensions
- Configuration and capacity
- Unmet student, enrollment and curricular space needs

The facilities master plan is designed to facilitate the education of the whole student, providing support for the full range of curricular and co-curricular activities that foster excellence, equity, and a sense of belonging for ALL OPRF students.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Education accept/receive the Facilities Master Plan presented by the Imagine Work Group. During the December 11, 2018, Committee of Whole meeting the administration will engage the Board of Education in discussions regarding what sequences of the Facilities Master Plan should be addressed initially, when and how to begin the process, and potential ways to fund the work.

Strategic Plan: Goal 6 Strategy 3

Board Goal:

District Policy:

I. Executive Summary with Recommendations

A. Background

After the narrow defeat of a District 200 (D200) facilities referendum in November 2016, the D200 Administration and Board decided to create a citizen-led committee to undertake a thorough assessment of the facilities needs at Oak Park and River Forest High School (OPRFHS) and create a comprehensive, long-term facilities master plan to address those needs. Superintendent Dr. Joylynn Pruitt-Adams convened a Launch Team composed of opponents and supporters of the referendum, community members whose referendum position was unknown, and faculty and staff members (see Appendix 1). The Launch Team selected 33 community members from more than 90 applicants, to which the Administration added 11 faculty and staff members to create the Imagine OPRF Work Group (see Appendix 2). Dr. Pruitt-Adams asked two community members who had been active in opposite referendum campaigns to serve as co-chairs. D200 also engaged several consultants to assist the Imagine Team with the master planning process (see Appendix 2).

B. The Imagine Process

Imagine worked from August 2017 through November 2018 to evaluate OPRFHS' facilities via a rigorous, needs-driven research process. Imagine put student learning and equity at the center of its work. Imagine then prioritized the list of needs it identified and, with the help of professional consultants, created the Imagine Facilities Master Plan as a vision for future facilities improvements at OPRFHS along with a list of specific facilities projects to achieve that vision.

A Rigorous, Needs-Driven Research Process

It is not surprising that Imagine found a multitude of facilities problems in such a large building, built in sections from 50 to 110 years ago. The Team spent seven months collecting data about the use and adequacy of OPRF's facilities to meet current and anticipated future needs, in addition to reviewing professional research and visiting comparable area schools. Data collection methods were thorough, detailed, and diverse, including a student survey (669 respondents), two faculty and staff surveys (360 respondents; 174 respondents), listening sessions with students (665+ participants), listening sessions and interviews with faculty and staff, tours of OPRF's facilities, several Community Engagement Sessions to gather public input, and consultation with architects and construction consultants engaged by District 200. (see Appendix 3 and Appendix 4) The resulting list of facilities problems is long.

Imagine spent the next six months working to prioritize the identified problems and to understand how the most important ones could be addressed in a long-term master plan, within the constraints of the school's physical space, the District's other priorities, and the community's financial concerns. Architectural renderings of how solutions to identified problems might – or might not – fit together, and public response to those renderings, helped Imagine pare down our list of needs to be addressed and forced us to set aside some of what we imagined. So the recommended plan does not propose the construction of a much-needed outdoor track; it does not include a new space for the popular ceramics program; it does not expand the footprint of the existing academic buildings out to Scoville Avenue; it does not include an entirely new classroom wing; it does not undertake renovations of the Little Theatre or Auditorium. Instead, it addresses the most physically urgent problems,

prioritizes student learning and safety, touches spaces used by the most students, emphasizes flexibility and multiple uses, and invests in making the building welcoming and accessible to all students.

Student Learning at the Center

Students and their learning needs are the foundation of everything Imagine has done. All OPRF students should be learning in spaces that are safe, accessible, and conducive to student health. Students should be learning in technology rich environments that fully support student-centered learning and provide teachers the flexibility to tailor teaching to student needs. Facilities should be sufficiently updated to ensure that students are adequately prepared for the next level, whether that be career or college. Facilities should enable collaboration among students and provide for learning inside and outside of the classroom and outside of school hours. Facilities should support the whole student with appropriate spaces for a full range of extracurricular activities; easy access to student support services; support for social and emotional growth; and consideration of diverse learning styles and needs so all students are supported in achieving their highest potential.

Attention to Equity

Imagine's inaugural meeting in August 2017 included adoption of an equity statement to guide our work. As individuals and as a Team, we have sought to consider the impacts of facilities on equity at every stage. Our listening session outreach prioritized groups whose voices are often not heard. We asked students – in surveys and listening sessions -- about how facilities impacted equity at OPRF and we listened carefully to their answers. We asked faculty and staff about the same issues. We observed interactions inside the building and at peer schools. And we challenged each other to be sure we were thinking about and prioritizing equity.

Imagine considered equity and inequity along several overlapping dimensions, including race, ability, gender, sex, class, and ethnicity, but also extending to other frequently marginalized groups who often feel unwelcome or not included (e.g., students who are frequently bullied or ostracized). The components of the master plan address equity issues in ways that are self-evident: adding elevators and removing barriers to improve ADA accessibility; designing facilities to meet the needs of students in the TEAM program; and creating all-gender bathrooms and locker rooms, for example. Other plan components address equity in ways that may not be immediately clear: the new indoor track will benefit an extracurricular activity with a large number of students of color; upgraded arts facilities provide safe spaces for students from frequently marginalized groups; facilities that improve access to on-campus resources – from printers to sound recording technology to spaces for quiet study or group work – help mitigate inequities at home; spaces created for collaboration and socializing will help address students' concerns that the school doesn't want them there; expanded gym and locker room facilities will alleviate concerns about gender equity for athletic teams; and a new school entrance will enhance security while making all students feel welcome.

Facilities alone cannot bring about equity at OPRF, but they literally shape what happens inside them. Facilities play a central role in how materials can be taught in classrooms, how security policies can be designed for public areas, and how students interact in the lunchroom, the library, and the common areas. Facilities are a key factor in how students experience their school and how welcome they feel in it. Well-designed facilities can have a profound impact on those who use them. Imagine seeks to create a school that is accessible and welcoming to all students and that removes facilities barriers to equity.

Facilities Needs Assessment and Prioritization

In its research, Imagine identified dozens of specific facilities needs and opportunities that fell into six general thematic categories:

1. Student learning spaces need to be reorganized, reconfigured and, in some cases, renovated and upgraded to meet current, changing, and future educational needs.
2. Inefficiency is prevalent as the result of decades of piecemeal problem-solving and assignment of spaces.
3. Connection and community could be better fostered through several facilities changes that would help create a more welcoming school.
4. Equity, along several dimensions, could be better fostered through facilities changes.
5. Configuration and capacity in several areas of the OPRF campus leave student, enrollment, and curricular needs unmet.
6. Condition of facilities in certain areas of the aging buildings negatively impact students and staff, despite decades of good maintenance.

A detailed needs assessment document and a discussion of Imagine's process for prioritizing those needs are both attached (see Appendix 8 and Appendix 5).

C. Facilities Master Plan

A facilities master plan is a vision for solving problems in a prioritized, coherent, and cost effective way over a period of time. It is a strategy for ensuring that investments made to solve problems today do not, literally, get in the way of solving other problems later.

A master plan is not a construction project where design and financing of every portion is done at the start. Instead, a master plan is a living document that should be reviewed and modified every few years as the impact of early projects is assessed, school needs change, and funding becomes available.

The Imagine Team has created a flexible, phased plan that can be financed and executed one sequence at a time, and can be paused after any sequence. A decision to implement one sequence does not commit the District to implementing later sequences. It is designed so the school is fully functional after each sequence. Adopting the plan as a vision and executing some early work does not obligate D200 to complete the entire plan or to do so on any particular timetable.

Master Plan Organizing Principles

The Facilities Master Plan for OPRF has been organized into a series of five sequences. Within those sequences the various elements of the master plan are further broken down into components (identified by letters). These components include groups of spaces based on reasonable project areas, common functional space, and logical divisions from adjacent spaces. The components are grouped together into the five sequences based on priorities assigned by the Imagine Team, construction efficiency in the execution of similar construction scope, and logical construction sequencing.

These components can be executed as discreet projects or grouped together into larger construction projects, giving the Board of Education the flexibility to decide how much they wish to address at any one time with the knowledge of how that component relates to all the other components of the overall master plan.

Master Plan Documents

The attached set of diagrams, spreadsheets, and other included documents detail the components included in the master plan, how they relate to each other in construction sequencing, location within the building, and estimated project budget cost. These documents include:

1. Architectural plan and component diagrams with an explanatory narrative (one document)
2. Floor plans of five sequences (five documents)
3. Master plan cost estimates for each sequence (two documents)

D. Master Plan Highlights

- The facilities master plan is designed to facilitate the **education of the whole student**, providing support for the full range of curricular and co-curricular activities that foster excellence, equity, and a sense of belonging for OPRF students.
- The **Student Commons** will create spaces in the center of the building where students can collaborate, study, socialize, and access essential services. The Commons will enhance campus safety by creating a defined area for these student activities and public access. That area can be closed off from the rest of the building and, thus, more manageably secured by staff.
- The new **Student Resource Center**, built above the South Cafeteria, will relocate library and tutoring center services into a facility designed to accommodate collaborative work and silent individual work. A location along the Commons will improve student access all day and will enable the SRC to remain open longer without the additional security personnel that would be required in their current locations. It is key that this work be executed first, to free up space in the academic areas of the existing building to make room for other components.
- It is important that the new **South East Facility** be executed early in the process to free up space at the south end of the campus to make room for the relocation of the performing arts facilities. The new South East Facility will house new locker and changing facilities for all students, a new multi-purpose gymnasium space, a single new swimming pool, a new elevator, new trainers' room, and additional gymnasium spaces for physical education.
- **Performing Arts facilities** will be updated and expanded to accommodate program growth and safety considerations. New music facilities will be located together in a new area that increases classroom sizes, provides sufficient practice and collaboration spaces, creates adequate storage, and improves efficiency. Renovated and expanded theatre facilities will include a relocated black box theatre (with modern safety features), an expanded stage craft area, and improvements to dressing rooms.
- The plan adds significant **academic facilities** and renovates virtually all classrooms and science labs in the building. What might appear to be disproportionate spending on physical education is really a reflection of the significant needs in those areas of the building, the larger area needed to teach physical education classes compared to academic ones, and the fact that the physical education spaces are built new, because renovation of existing facilities was not cost effective for work effectively and efficiently meeting students' educational needs today and tomorrow.

- The master plan addresses the shortcomings in our current **Special Education facilities** by expanding and renovating the TEAM spaces, improving meeting spaces for professionals and families, and ensuring that facilities needs of all Special Education programs are adequately met and located throughout the building. Meeting spaces that serve frequent visitors, like conference rooms for IEP meetings, would be located near an entrance and within an easily secured area of the building.
- **Career and Technical Education (CTE) facilities** are improved in the master plan, including new Family and Consumer Sciences and stage craft facilities, along with renovations of the woodshop, automotive shop, and other unassigned CTE spaces at the north end of the building.
- The plan **prioritizes ADA accessibility** throughout the campus, thus reducing inequities based on disability.
- **Creating a welcoming school** is key to the master plan.
 - Students of color reported feeling unwelcome in a school where there are too few spaces for them to gather during and after school. The master plan creates welcoming spaces that encourage students to gather in the heart of the school.
 - Gender expansive and trans students told Imagine that inadequate restroom and locker room facilities make them feel unwelcome. The master plan creates adequate spaces to meet the privacy needs of all students.
 - Students reported feeling unwelcome in the cafeterias. Renovations of cafeterias and surrounding spaces will mitigate that.
 - Students with disabilities reported feeling unwelcome when confronted by physical barriers to their free movement throughout the school. The plan addresses ADA accessibility in every sequence.
- **School security enhancements** include a new Welcome Center, positioning administration and other public facing offices near the main entrance to the school to control public access and maintain secure zones within the building, and bringing after school activities to the center of the building to limit access to unmonitored areas.
- **Student Services** will be relocated to the center of the building to increase student access to these resources before, during, and after school.
- **Extracurriculars** connect students to the school, help them find a home in a large institution, and boost academic performance. These activities are particularly important for those who feel unwelcome or marginalized. The master plan prioritizes flexible learning facilities building-wide that can also be used outside of school hours for arts, athletics, and other extracurriculars.
- **Cafeteria and food service** facilities would get significant renovation to upgrade equipment, improve service and efficiency, and create a more welcoming space for students.
- **Flexible and multiple-use facilities** are incorporated into every element of the master plan. The landlocked location, financial considerations, and changing school needs necessitate this.
- The plan includes **sustainability measures** for improving efficiency, installing photovoltaic solar panels, and installing green roofs (for controlling stormwater runoff, improving energy efficiency, and reducing heat reflected into the environment).

E. Imagine Team Recommendations

- We recommend that the District 200 Board of Education accept the entire facilities master plan as a guiding vision for meeting the identified long-term facilities needs of the school in a coherent, logical, comprehensive manner.
- We recommend that future facilities investments proceed largely in the order indicated in the master plan. The sequences represent prioritized needs as well as constructability considerations.
- We recommend that the execution of the plan acknowledge constructability constraints, work to minimize disruption, and leverage economies of scale (e.g., doing science labs at same time).
- We recommend that bids for design and engineering for the first pieces of work be solicited by January or February 2019 in order to begin construction in May or June of 2020. Time is of the essence because missing this first milestone will cause a delay of a full year for anything that follows.
- We recommend that the Board bid and let contracts for design and engineering for sequences one and two this winter and, while that engineering work is in progress, make the decision as to whether to execute the construction for those sequences simultaneously or sequentially.
- We recommend that an organized approach be established to aggressively pursue private funds to supplement ongoing D200 investment in capital projects to complete middle and later sequences.
- We recommend that the Board establish a goal of completing all this work within 10 years, but we realize that circumstances may not allow for the completion of all individual projects within that time frame. We hope that future Boards will continue to be guided by the plan and implement portions of it as needs require and funding permits.
- We recommend that the Board establish a regular schedule for reviewing the master plan; invite members of Imagine to participate in that review to tap into their institutional knowledge; and ensure that students, faculty, and staff are part of the review process.
- The Board may want to consider establishing an advisory team from Imagine to provide input about why particular sequencing decisions were made and to ensure that any changes to sequencing meet identified, prioritized needs.
- We recommend that LEED certification be explored for all future new construction.