

Post Falls School District #273

Long Range Facility Plan

April 2002

Board of Trustees

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School District Administration

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Sid Armstrong, Director of Business Services

Long Range Facility Plan Committee

Facilitator: Sid Armstrong, Director of Business Services

Committee Members

Scott Fischer	
Randy Allen	Architects West
Julie Billetz	Post Falls Middle School Vice Principal
Don Boyk	KinderCenter Principal
Carol Carlson	Post Falls Middle School Principal
Dick Menti	Post Falls High School Vice-Principal
Rod Mitchell	Maintenance Supervisor
Bill Ramich	Transportation Supervisor
Sue Wood	Seltice Elementary School Principal
Jami Benner	Custodial Supervisor
Melanie Gillette	Post Falls Middle School Teacher
Peggy Harriman	Ponderosa Elementary School Teacher
Gary Hays	New Vision High School Teacher
Rachael Krum	Custodian / ESP Representative
Bob Ickes	Mullan Trail Elementary School Teacher
Doug Mohney	Patron
Bruce Noble	Patron
Jerry Sinclair	Patron
Paul Wagner	Patron
Collin Coles	Patron
Ruth Brewer	City Planner
Karen Cole	Parent
Roxanne Donlan	Parent
Alyssa Huft	Parent
Deanne Johnson	Parent
Dave Paul	Parent
Vickie Scuderi	Parent
Linda Seed	Parent
Steve Slaney	Parent
Steve Soltys	Parent
	Parent

OVERVIEW

The Post Falls School District has identified key areas of review and planning over the next ten years. The Board of Trustees charged the administration to review the district’s vision, goals and objectives to ensure they reflect the community’s needs and expectations. Additionally the Board charged the administration to review population demographics to address immediate and long term facility needs. The district enlisted the assistance of community members and staff as a long range facility plan committee to identify these needs, mesh them with the overall strategic plan and develop a specific facilities needs prioritization list.

District Snapshot

- District size: 64 square miles
- Personnel: 600
- Enrollment: 4,500 students
- Budget: \$27 million
- Transportation: 36 buses transporting 2,600 kids daily, traveling 321,000 miles per year
- Food Service: 480,075 meals served in 2000-2001, 8 serving sites, 7 kitchens, approximately 180 serving days
- Maintenance: 8 schools, 130 acres of grounds and fields, 472,000 square feet of building space

“The Post Falls School District is a vibrant, growing school district in transition. With an enrollment of approximately 4,500 students, a staff of 600 and a budget of \$27 million, the district is a key partner and employer in a community that is working to adapt to change and growth in positive ways.”

Dr. Robert Dutton, Management and Operational Review Team Leader

INTRODUCTION

From December, 2001 through April, 2002, the Long Range Facility Plan Committee reviewed the enrollment, facilities and construction history of the Post Falls School District. The 30-member committee was charged by the Board of Trustees with developing short term facility solutions and long term facility plans to accommodate the consistent growth in the greater Post Falls area.

The Board gave the committee a first task of developing a solution for the overcrowding at Post Falls Middle School. Further tasks were to identify the sequence of existing building remodel projects, new construction projects and land acquisition. The committee worked diligently to identify the areas of need and a sequence of project completion within the parameters of fiscal responsibility and effective stewardship.

The committee first reviewed and amended the district's facility goal and objectives to reflect the needs of students and the community today and over the next decade. Action plans were developed from the list of objectives to provide a working model for addressing the various projects.

The following facilities planning recommendations are the result of concentrated effort by community parents and patrons, district staff and administrators. The recommendations are given with an understanding of community needs and fiscal limitations. A 3% growth rate based on consistent historical data over the past ten years is used for projections of the need for additional facilities. Facility needs could be accelerated if the growth rate exceeds 3% or slowed if the rate should fall below the stated growth rate. As the community grows, the sequence of project completion may be readjusted to accommodate the immediate needs of the district.

The committee and the district administration respectfully submit this long range facility plan to the Trustees of the Post Falls School District for their consideration.

Sid Armstrong
Director of Business Services

District Mission Statement

With the support and collaboration of students, parents, patrons and community, the Post Falls School District will ensure that all students have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be productive and responsible citizens.

District Goals

- < To provide a safe and caring environment for students, employees and community members.
- < To develop and maintain a curriculum which will challenge and meet the needs of all students.
- < To challenge all students to achieve at their highest level and to become independent life long learners.
- < To acquire and efficiently manage fiscal and human resources that will implement the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.
- < To provide facilities that will enhance present and future educational programs and endeavors.
- < To increase parent, community and business involvement in the education process.
- < To provide a comprehensive employee and community communication system.

Goals & Objectives

Facilities

Goal: To provide facilities that will enhance present and future educational programs and endeavors.

Objectives: The Post Falls School District will:

- < provide neighborhood school sites and facilities of sufficient number and size to effectively house all students.
- < provide facilities that are safe, secure and allow for an optimal learning environment.
- < provide facilities that are cost effective, easily and well maintained, energy efficient and aesthetically pleasing.
- < provide sufficient equipment that is technologically advanced to complement instruction.
- < provide facilities that are designed to adapt to future educational programming.

< provide facilities that invite use by the community at large.

Short Term Facility Plan

The first charge by the Board of Trustees to the Long Range Facility Plan Committee was to develop a plan that would address the student population issues at the Post Falls Middle School. With approximately 1,150 students housed at the middle school during the 2001-2002 school year, the population exceeds the maximum for the core facility as well as the optimum learning environment. Additionally, the district is expecting approximately of 1,200 students at this site for the 2002-2003 school year and beyond. The site is designed for about 950 students and has six portable classrooms on site at this time with two more scheduled to be moved on site during the summer of 2002.

Recommendation

The committee recommends that the Board of Trustees proceed with plans to build a new “starter” middle school on land already owned by the district near Chase Road and 15th Street. A “starter” middle school has been defined by the committee as a school which will initially be built to accommodate approximately 500 students. The design would include an infrastructure to eventually accommodate 900 students. It is the consensus of the committee that this recommendation be acted upon as soon as is reasonably feasible.

Rationale

The committee considered a number of possible solutions to the current overcrowding problems being encountered at the middle school. The starter middle school, a fully built middle school, a sixth grade center and the construction of an additional elementary school were all considerations that the committee discussed, weighing pros and cons, before making its recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

The committee recommends the starter middle school because it would meet the educational philosophies of the district, effectively and efficiently house all students of middle school age and meet these requirements with the least impact to the taxpayers of the school district. The starter middle school will maintain the educational concept of middle school which was adopted by the district in the 1997-98 school year. The school will be built to eventually house approximately 900 students, which is the maximum the committee felt should be housed in one middle school. The gymnasium, the library facility, the commons, lunch area, and the office and counseling areas would all be built to accommodate the maximum student load or to be added on at a later date. However, the classroom wings would only be built to house approximately 500 students upon its completion, thus saving current cost of construction funding and allowing the district to add required classroom space at a future time when it was needed.

The committee anticipates funding this recommendation by means of a school plant facility levy. This type of funding allows a “pay as you go” concept for financing the construction. The money would be levied over a period of years but would most likely not exceed eight years at which time the debt would be repaid. This was deemed preferable by the committee to the standard twenty year bond issue which requires twenty years to repay the debt and much higher total cost of interest. The school plant facility concept would require a voter approval rate of sixty percent to pass.

Action Plan

- C The district administration would request that the Board of Trustees consider the recommendation and establish a timeline regarding a possible school plant facility levy (SPFL).
- C The district would embark on a comprehensive communications plan for the community regarding the new school.
- C Upon successful passage of an SPFL or other funding levy, a committee of parents, patrons and district staff would work with the architect in the design of the building.
- C As the school was being constructed, a committee of parents, patrons and district staff would draw new middle school boundaries based on current demographic information.

Ancillary Recommendation

The committee recommends that the Board of Trustees consider adding funding to the cost of other recommendations referenced in this report in order to complete some necessary miscellaneous projects that have not been funded in other ways. Examples of this type of project that the committee considered to be of a higher priority nature are completion of the track facility at the high school which was not approved in Part B of the 1998 high school construction levy, replacement/remodeling of the transportation facility and completion of the current middle school cafeteria expansion project which is in the design stage.

Other projects discussed by the committee that require consideration by the Board of Trustees include a performing arts center/auditorium at Post Falls High School, playground equipment upgrades at the elementary sites and energy efficient windows at Frederick Post Education Center and Mullan Trail Elementary School.

Rationale

It is the consensus of the committee that, whenever possible, combining the cost of various facility needs in funding levies will assist in the completion of smaller projects that cost too much for regular funding but are too small for a levy on their own.

Action Plan

- C The district administration would evaluate and prioritize individual facility needs and would develop funding options to complete the projects.
- C The district administration would develop a recommendation for the Board of Trustees to pursue a funding levy.
- C Upon Board approval the district would run a funding levy appropriate to the projects identified for completion.

- C Upon successful passage of the funding levy, the district would work with appropriate architects and patron/parent committees to develop the necessary plans for project completion.

Long Term Facility Plan

The long term facility plan is based upon historical data and current projections of population growth and distribution. The committee established the following recommendations with the understanding that a number of factors may contribute to the Board of Trustees and the district administration adjusting the sequence of priorities at a future date. The committee's recommendations are offered with the request that the district continue its efforts to educate and communicate with the community regarding school facility needs.

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Board of Trustees consider the construction of an elementary school at the time that the elementary school population exceeds the recommended capacities of the current elementary schools in the Post Falls School District. Based on consistent historical growth data, this event could occur in approximately the year 2005.

Rationale

Based on the factors of student population growth and distribution, optimum elementary school enrollment, neighborhood schools and the "feeder school" concept, it is anticipated that another elementary will be needed. This would alleviate any crowding conditions at the existing elementary schools and provide for growth.

Action Plan

- C The district would evaluate school population and distribution to determine the need for and the location of another elementary school.
- C Upon approval by the Board of Trustees, the district would begin the process of running a bond or school plant facility levy to provide funding for an elementary school. Concurrently, the district would embark on a comprehensive communications plan for the community regarding the new school.
- C Upon successful passage of an SPFL or other funding levy, a committee of parents, patrons and district staff would work with the architect in the design of the building.
- C As the school is being constructed, a committee of parents, patrons and district staff would draw new elementary school boundaries based on current demographic information.

Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that the Board of Trustees consider the construction of an additional elementary school at the time when the elementary school population again exceeds the recommended capacities of the current elementary schools in the Post Falls School District. A new kindergarten center or new facilities for the alternative secondary program need to be considered as these programs will outgrow the Frederick Post Educational Center. Based on consistent historical growth data, this event could occur in approximately the year 2008.

Rationale

Based on the factors of student population growth and distribution, optimum elementary school enrollment, neighborhood schools and the “feeder school” concept, it is anticipated that another elementary school will be needed. This would alleviate any crowding conditions at the existing elementary schools.

The KinderCenter will outgrow its current housing at Frederick Post Educational Center as student population growth impacts the district as a whole. The alternative secondary program is located at the opposite end of the Frederick Post building. The kindergarten center and the alternative secondary program won’t be able to co-exist in this building by 2008. The district will need to find or construct alternate housing for one of these programs.

Action Plan

- C The district would evaluate school population and distribution to determine the need for and the location of another elementary school.
- C The district would evaluate school population and distribution to determine the need for and the location of either the KinderCenter or New Vision Alternative School.
- C Upon approval by the Board of Trustees, the district would begin the process of running a bond or school plant facility levy to provide funding for a new facility.
- C The district would embark on a comprehensive communications plan for the community regarding the new school.
- C Upon successful passage of an SPFL or other funding levy, a committee of parents, patrons and district staff would work with the architect in the design of the building.
- C If a new elementary school is being constructed, a committee of parents, patrons and district staff would draw new elementary school boundaries based on current demographic information.

Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Board of Trustees consider completing the classroom wings and additional infrastructure on the “starter” middle school and adding four classrooms to the end of each of the two classroom wings on the high school. Based on consistent historical growth data, this project could occur in approximately the year 2011.

Rationale

It is the consensus of the committee that all building projects be completed to the fullest extent possible. While the committee understands the funding constraints inherent in school facility construction and recommended a starter middle school, it is critical to the educational process that space be available for all students. Additionally, that space must provide for a comprehensive educational program appropriate to the age level.

Action Plan

- C Based on current student population data, the district would evaluate the need and time frame to complete the construction and finishing of classroom and other educational space at the starter middle school.
- C Upon Board approval the district would run a funding levy to complete the starter middle school and add classrooms at Post Falls High School. This funding levy could combine a variety of facility projects that might include new construction and building remodel.

Recommendation 4

The committee recommends that the Post Falls School District continue to seek property suitable for school sites in the various sections of the district boundaries with a general consideration for neighborhood schools.

Rationale

The committee believes school site acquisition to be an on-going recommendation that will exceed the life of this ten year facility plan.

It is the consensus of this committee that significant growth will eventually reach into each section of the district.

The district has four future school sites. These are:

1. A 20-acre site located close to Chase Road and 15th Street for a middle school;
2. A 9-acre site located west of Chase Road and north of Seltice Way in the Montrose Development for an elementary school;
3. A 13-acre site located on McGuire Road and Prairie Avenue for an elementary school;
4. A 10-acre site located between Poleline Avenue and Prairie Avenue west of Greensferry Road in the Prairie Falls Development (year 2006) for an elementary school.

Action Plan

- C The district should continue to develop a comprehensive site review with the purpose of identifying potential school sites for purchase or trade. This review could include information on areas of residential growth and plans for city expansion.
- C As the district acquires property, the district would develop a plan for optimal placement of future schools. The district would consider the proximity of “feeder” schools to each other.

- C The district would pursue options for land donations by property development companies.
- C The district would consider the acquisition of property as possible “trading stock.”