

10/8/2018:

In response to an email from Maria Kopicki, which recorded feedback from members of the (building committee?) (Amherst Community?), TSKP has written a response. Member comments are in normal type. TSKP responses are in bold:

1. There is some sentiment that "isolating" 6th graders in their own wing is actually not a great idea. "They are less a part of the school and it does not promote community. Either encourage them to remain a part of the school or have them become part of the MS." Obviously, whether they remain in the ES or go to the MS is not our decision, but maybe we need to rethink designs that separate them so much.

TSKP/JS Response: In all of our designs the 6th graders are seen as an integral part of the school. We believe this comment is directed at Option C, in which the 6th grade classrooms ended up on Level 1. We will revise to move the 6th grade to Level 2 and bring the district Special Needs to Level 1.

2. Cubby set up at CF is actually problematic from an accessibility point of view - suggested all go along a wall or have more room to maneuver (maybe more like Photo 12?).

TSKP/JS Response: Understood.

3. Compiled thoughts from someone:
Consider skylights.

TSKP/JS Response: Yes, we have some thoughts about skylights that are not showing up yet in our very conceptual sketches.

Consider pitched roofs for solar arrays.

TSKP/JS Response: We will. We plan on discussing sustainable strategies at the 10/10 meeting.

Could gym stay where it is and cafeteria be moved? Seems like having classrooms on the south, east and west would maximize use of natural light and energy, and replacing 6000sf that is not absolutely necessary will add to cost.

TSKP/JS Response: In response to this suggestion we've developed a new option E.

Keep Special Needs spaces and preschool/kindergarten on the ground floor if in a 2-story building. If there is any mobility challenges and elevator breaks, access could be cut off.

TSKP/JS Response: OK. We've revised Option C accordingly.

Reduce gross square footage of different spaces to better align with MSBA guidelines.

TSKP/JS Response: This comment is unclear. IF the intent is to reduce our "Proposed" room sizes to meet MSBA guidelines, we would need to know which rooms you have in mind. If the comment is to point out that some of the rooms in our studies exceed the size we're targeting, as shown in the "Proposed" column, we would agree. Some spaces are too large and some are too small. As we refine our sketches they will better represent the sizes in the Proposed column.

Analyze library collection usage to determine which volumes can be culled. Only accommodate volumes in high use. For popular titles, use data analysis of usage patterns to determine how many copies are needed. Some may have been popular a few years ago but are no longer.

TSKP/JS Response: We have not received any data regarding library collection usage. It would probably be better if you analyze the collection and tell us how much linear footage of shelving space you'd like us to plan on.

Consider flexibility of expansion - where could four classrooms be added? Record how much larger the shared spaces would be if the population were 500-550.

TSKP/JS Response: At this time the BC has asked us to look at a range of 360-420. We would ask the BC to confirm that we are to look at other student enrollment ranges.

Try to think of creative alternative layouts of the bus loop and parking lot and access road(s).

TSKP/JS Response: Yes, we'll keep looking for creative solutions.

I remain concerned about total square footage and significantly higher sq ft than MSBA standards. I'll go through the Space Summary sections individually but my overall thought is to make sure that every room/space that can be multipurpose/shared should be.

TSKP/JS Response: Flexibility is an important goal. Let us know the results of any further analysis you perform.

CORE ACADEMIC

We have 3 rooms/grade 1-6 for 18 total whereas MSBA has 13 rooms. Am I correct that the difference is due to the District's policy of smaller class size?

TSKP/JS Response: Yes, MSBA allows class sizes to go up to 22 -24 (321 + 24students / CR = 13 classrooms) depending on grade. Amherst is targeting 18 students per class (321+18 students/CR=17.8 classrooms).

There are 6 breakout spaces at 150 sf each. That's one per grade 1-6 but none for PreK or K? Do they need space, too? Can the sf/room decrease - maybe use halls or other areas creatively?

TSKP/JS Response: It sounds like there needs to be a break out for K and PK. If the committee agrees, we can modify the room list accordingly.

SPED

Am I correct that the 3 Resource Rooms are meant to be similar to what CF calls RTI?

TSKP/JS Response: We were impressed by the RTI spaces at Crocker Farms, but we have not adopted them into the Fort River Program. For example, in the Fort River program we have separate rooms for (2) Reading, (2) Speech, (1) Math, (2) ELL, and (3) Resource (Special Education). Crocker Farm has fewer; and is able to use the RTI to meet their needs. Please, advise as to whether the Fort River program should continue as proposed or follow the Crocker Farm precedent.

BB has 2 classrooms/reflection rooms. If that program ends up being located in 2 schools, presumably that would decrease to 1. **TSKP/JS Response: Presumably.**

Speech and Reading - why 2 rooms for each and not 1? Is one for PreK? If so and CF and FR PreK both provide General and Special Ed PreK, it would presumably free up space at CF

TSKP/JS Response: We noticed that Crocker Farm has zero rooms for Reading and 2 rooms for Speech of which one serves PK. However, CF uses RTI rooms, which reduces dedicated spaces. See above response to RTI spaces.

Fort River has four reading teachers. In our experience the 350sf room size we've proposed will each allow 2 reading teachers to meet with a small group of students. Having two rooms allows us to distribute reading services in the building, such as to upper and lower grades.

Fort River has two Speech rooms currently of about 150sf, which is what we've proposed. Should there be a third to serve the incoming PK program or will the current staff members be able to serve that program as well?

Remind me what the Sensory and Office for ETL are? Do they need individual rooms or can there be sharing/multi-use?

TSKP/JS Response: MSBA guidelines have an office for the Education Team Leader. I believe FR's current ETL office is near the teacher work area / faculty lounge.

The Sensory room is a quiet, soothing space which exists at FR. Teachers can reserve space in the Sensory Room and bring groups of students there to work on a project or engage in quiet work. A more detailed program for this room will need to be developed going forward.

There are 2 rooms here that are also listed in Admin: Conference and Psychologist. Can they be reduced to 1 each?

TSKP/JS Response: Possibly. FR currently uses a second small conference room for IEP meetings. It may be that one conference room in the Administration area can be scheduled appropriately.

TSKP/JS Response: Only one Psychologist's office is being Proposed.

ART & MUSIC

Music practice space is very large at 2 rooms of 500 sf each. MSBA seems a bit small at 3 rooms of 75 sf each. Can we hit a happy medium? Also, music lessons/ensemble only takes place 1.5 days/week. This is definitely space that could be shared with something else.

TSKP/JS Response: We've understood that the existing Band and Orchestra rooms at FR are too small at about 175 SF each. For reference, CF has a practice room which is 215 SF, but Principal Shea, noted that this room is not a good example to follow. We went to 500 SF based on having 6-8 students with large instruments. Based on your comment, I suggest we eliminate the MSBA's three practice rooms and go with Band and Orchestra rooms which are 300 SF each.

Instrument storage seems big at 300 sf - instruments go home with kids so it's just having a place to park them on days they have band/orchestra/lessons. What about storage space under the stage?

TSKP/JS Response: We agree. We will eliminate the Instrument Storage room. Instruments go home with students. CF does not have one either.

HEALTH & PHYS ED

A gymnasium sized at 3000sf (like CF) is too small and even 4100 cf (like WW/FR) is cramped and problematic but 6000sf (per MSBA) is overkill. Can we bring this down to accommodate a play/court space like we have now plus bleachers on one side but not a full-size bball court (not necessary for ES or a building where only 1 gym class at a time will occur).

TSKP/JS Response: I do not believe we have a full size basketball court in our 6000 SF gymnasium. We can show you some gym layouts to give you a sense. Sounds like we're going to end up between 5000 and 6000 SF.

MEDIA CENTER

You've heard my thoughts here - we are simply not going to be able to have a 4700 sf space for this and we need to bring this more inline with MSBA. Perhaps it would help to explain that if the computer lab/maker space (now listed in CORE ACADEMIC) is adjacent to or within the MEDIA CENTER, that's actually ~3300 sf?

TSKP/JS Response: Yes, we think having the computer lab/ maker space adjacent will definitely help. We're proceeding with a Media Center size which is per MSBA guidelines.

ADMIN & GUIDANCE

Already talked about Psych and conference room and multi-purpose space in general.

TSKP/JS Response: Noted.

Parent Room at 150 sf can definitely be shared/multi-use space.

TSKP/JS Response: Noted.

I apologize if this is too much detail or redundant - let me know. I have some ideas about conveying our guiding principles to the public and getting more feedback. Shall I send those along, too?

TSKP/JS Response: Yes.