

Task Force on the Future of Education in the City of Lynchburg: PreK-12 and Beyond  
Operations, Facilities and Consolidation (Facilities) Subcommittee

December 18, 2019

Meeting Location: Finance Conference Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, School Administration Building,  
915 Court Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504

MINUTES

Subcommittee Chair Kimball Payne called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

1. Introductions – Members introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds. They also provided telephone numbers as follows:

Steve Gatzke	434.	██████████
Stu Gitchell	804.	██████████
Butch Jefferson	434.	██████████
Linda Jones	434.	██████████
Kelvin Moore	434.	██████████
Kimball Payne	434.	██████████

Deputy Superintendent Ben Copeland was also present for the meeting.

2. Review of Charter Responsibilities and Timeline – The subcommittee had a discussion regarding its responsibilities. Although there was a general understanding of the role of the subcommittee in examining school facilities, there was less clarity about its responsibilities regarding “operations” and “consolidation.” A consensus developed that the subcommittee would initially focus on school buildings and certain support operations such as transportation and information technology. It was acknowledged that City and Schools staff had looked at consolidating support operations over the years and that there was collaboration and cooperation between the respective departments.

There was a discussion regarding the school buildings. It was decided that, due to the recent renovation of E.C. Glass High School and the construction of a new Heritage High School, an examination of those facilities was initially off the table. Similarly, two of the three middle schools, Sandusky and Linkhorne, are in excellent condition. Dunbar Middle School needs some attention and an examination of any changes to the physical plant should be undertaken with a sensitivity to the school’s important cultural and historic significance in the community. The subcommittee decided to start its work with a focus on the elementary schools because, as a group, they are older and the most in need of renovation. In addition, actions taken regarding the elementary schools could affect the middle schools.

3. Review of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requirements – the requirements were reviewed with attention paid to the definition of a meeting of the subcommittee, requirements for public notice, and openness and transparency.

4. Discussion of the Appropriate Size for the Subcommittee and Potential Additional Members – There was a consensus that the size of the subcommittee was appropriate and that if additional information or expertise was needed others could be invited to participate as guests.
5. Discussion on How to Get the Subcommittee Up to Speed – it was noted that quite a bit of information was available on the Task Force’s shared drive that is accessible to subcommittee members. Requests were made for the following additional information:
  - Construction standards and costs
  - The most recent schools Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
  - The calculated capacity of each elementary school
  - A listing of the special programs provided at each elementary school

The subcommittee decided that a tour of the eleven elementary schools would be useful. Two days, January 10<sup>th</sup> and January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 were identified as tour dates. Another future date may be selected to tour the alternative school facilities.

6. Interaction with other Subcommittees – The Enrollment and Demographics Subcommittee has identified liaisons to help support information requests from the other subcommittees. No one felt the need to designate liaisons from the Facilities Subcommittee to interact with the other subcommittees. City and Schools staff will help to coordinate across the subcommittees and members were encouraged to read the Task Force minutes and other information posted on the shared drive.
7. General Discussion – the following points were captured:
  - There is a need for additional space, potentially a doubling of the square footage, for alternative school programs. There may be an opportunity for further regionalization of alternative education programs. Some communities are adding “alternative” wings in new buildings to provide respite space for certain behavioral or special needs.
  - The bus maintenance facility needs an upgrade. The potential for the consolidation of some maintenance activities with GLTC or the City could be explored.
  - The “sweet spot” for elementary schools, from a staffing and economies of scale perspective is between 600 to 800 students per school. This would imply that, in an ideal world, Lynchburg would have 5 to seven elementary schools, instead of eleven. The subcommittee was very aware that many variables could cause deviation from the ideal and sees an exploration of those variables as part of its charge.
8. Action Item Assignments – Deputy Superintendent Copeland and Steve Gatzke will provide the information requested above.

Subcommittee members were asked to start thinking about the possible contents of the report it is expected to provide to the Task Force.

9. Future Meetings Schedule:

- January 10, 2020, 9:00 a.m., location TBD – Tour of elementary schools
- January 17, 2020, 9:00 a.m., location TBD – Tour of elementary schools
- January 24, 2020, 9:00 a.m., Schools Administration Building – regular meeting

10. The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m.