



Facility Inquiry Team(Middle Level) Meeting Minutes~1/12/23 6:30-8:00 PM  
East Penn School District Administrative Conference Room A & B

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**Agenda** [Middle School FIT Committee Agenda 1/11/23](#)

### **Welcome and introductions of middle level team-Jen Carolla**

**Steve Onushco-** Steve Onushco introduced Steve Behrens, Education Consultant from Breslin Architects, who is here to guide us through the process of deciding on possible facilities options. Breslin Architects is an educational architectural firm that focuses on K-12 educational planning and design. They will be attending FIT meetings to advise on construction projects and phasing, timelines, and the budget process in a way that connects possible facilities upgrades around the educational goals and curriculum of the district. Steve is here to support us in any way that he can to make justifiable actionable solutions that meet the needs of East Penn.

### **Review of 11/22/22 large group meeting notes, feedback sheet, questions and answers-Jen Carolla**

- List of other districts that currently have a 5/ 6 Model -review of PVAAS data and Greater Valley School District overview, which is in the middle of this process.
- If we continue down this path, would we be able to speak to other districts? Yes.
- PIAA rules -How would separating 5/ 6 and 7/ 8 affect athletics? Create Green/Gold teams. We could need possible facilities updates to coordinate teams.
- Special Education classroom breakdown room utilization review-thoughts on a building of their own- Not at this time. Not inclusive and no transportation at this time. Are the classrooms prepared for growth? LMMS Sensory Room might need updates.
- Would new model bell time changes affect transportation needs? Possibly.
- Housing projection review-Decision Insight (October 2022 data)-do these numbers support possible redistricting?
- Review of DEI numbers- do these numbers support possible redistricting?
- What is the ideal physical needs matrix for middle level? Pod challenges, additional rest room needs, special education facility locations, auditorium and cafeteria sizes, and air conditioning upgrades might be needed.
- Has there been an 8/9 building consideration? Not at this time.

What are the opportunities and obstacles of 5/6 and 7/8 grade level realignment?

### **Opportunities-**

- Consistent curriculum between buildings and common planning time for teachers.
- Ability for all same grade level teachers to collaborate (including cross-curricularly)
- Having students together to get to know each other and be a part of a community.
- Curricular/teacher supervision by administration could be better managed without departments split across multiple buildings.
- More inclusive practices for special education students to go to school with same age student peers.
- Could open up opportunities that current 5th graders don't have currently.
- Prevents possible exposure to older students. Keep students in a grade appropriate environment.
- Have the ability to concentrate on preparing 7/ 8 students for high school.
- More teachers in each grade level could increase opportunity for student/teacher connections.
- 5th and 6th graders are developmentally more similar
- Equitable programming and resources would be offered to all students in each grade level because they would be together in one building.

### **Obstacles-**

- Another transition. Some children will make the transition well and others might not.
- The GV single teacher model felt like a concern.
- Delayed confidence with transitioning to another building right when students gain confidence with their peers.
- Taking away the role model factor from 6,7,8 models.
- Structure and developmental changes are just delayed, not fixed. Instead of 6th graders struggling with new student challenges, it will be the 7th graders.
- Will we lose the family feeling? Will 7/ 8 become more of a junior high environment?
- Community pushback.
- Accessibility of extracurricular and athletic opportunities for students.
- Enrollment numbers in a 7 / 8 building and management of behaviors.

### **Final discussions:**

- The team will be compiling questions for other districts based off of priorities discussed at tonight's meeting-Jen Carolla
- Reviewed the timeline for presenting findings and recommendations from FIT meetings.
- Discussed possibility of phasing models.
- How does cost influence our decisions?

### **Next meeting-TBD**

**Adjournment- 8:10 PM**

### **Attendance:**

**Meeting 1/12/23**

Scott Ketcham	Teacher	
David Budinas	Teacher	
Steve Behrens	Architects	
Steve Onushco	Director of Facilities	
Laura Groh	Community Liaison	
Julianne Kahl	Teacher	
Erin Murphy	Supervisor of Humanities	
Jess Thatcher	Supervisor of Elem. C & I	
Jody Freed	Supervisor of MS Special Education	
Heather Slatoff	Assistant Principal-LMMS	
Matt Spengler	Assistant Athletic Director	
Tom Ruhf	Principal- Eyer	
Ajay Joshi	Community Member	
April Bispeck	Community Member	
Denine Leschinsky	Instructional Support-LMMS	
Andrew Krahulik	Community Member	
Tom Mirabella	Director of Student Services	
Kristen Campbell	Superintendent	
Jennifer Carolla	Director of Educational Alternatives	Committee Lead
Adam Smith	School Board Director	Committee Lead