

**Central Valley School District  
Facilities Options Committee  
Work Session Summary**

**May 7, 2007, 6:30 – 8:50 p.m.**

**Present:** Andrea Benson, Sharon Carlson, Tom Brattebo, Brian Grytdal, Kathy Jackson, Ian Robertson, Shannan Skidmore, Doug Wheeler, Chris Haase, Anne Martin, Rustin Hall, Victoria Jensen, Maureen Weisbeck, David Almeida and Tori Head.  
**Facilitator:** Helen Jones, Jones Consulting and Melanie Rose, Public Information Officer and liaison to the District. **Guest Presenters:** Jan Hutton, CVSD Executive Director of Finance; Dave Jackman, CVSD Director of Auxiliary Services

**Absent:** Daryl Hart, Ryan Mulligan, Karen Toreson, Dan Simmons, Harmony Reilly, Laura Visco

Committee members briefly introduced themselves for the benefit of the guest presenters.

The **topics addressed** at this meeting included:

- Distributed summary of April 30 committee work session
- Guest speaker Jan Hutton - Enrollment basics and projections
- Guest speaker Dave Jackman - Answers to questions generated on 4/30
- Process – where do we go from here?

**Enrollment Basics & Projections – Jan Hutton, Executive Director of Finance**

Jan handed out copies of the *May 2007 Enrollment Report*. She explained the legal requirement for the school district to generate this report to the state nine times per year (Sept. – May). The information contained in the report drives about \$54 million of the district's annual general fund budget.

She defined two important terms:

- Head count – literally the number of student bodies
- FTE – Full Time Equivalency – the full time equivalency of those students

Jan pointed out the main difference between elementary enrollment head count and FTE in May represents half-day kindergarten students who count as “one head count” and “one-half FTE”. A similar difference at the high school level between these two numbers can be attributed to students who attend high school part time, go to the Skills Center, attend Running Start or similar programs which take them off the high school campus for part or all of a school day.

The enrollment reports are used to look at trends. In general, the district tends to see a gain in elementary enrollment over the course of the school year. Middle school enrollment holds fairly steady and high school enrollment tends to decline.

The enrollment report is also used to establish staffing and budget levels for district schools. Staffing is set using September enrollment and finalized with the October 1 enrollment report. The October 1 enrollment report is also used to allocate school building budgets (except for high schools which uses a projected annual average based on the October enrollment).

Jan handed out copies of the district's standard *Weighted Cohort Survival Formula*, which is used to determine projected enrollment. The process to project enrollment for the upcoming school year begins in December of the current school year. The formula incorporates historical data for the past four years to project enrollment for the next seven years. The projected kindergarten enrollment number is the "softest" number on the spreadsheet because the district really has no idea how many potential kindergarten students are living in the district. All the other enrollment numbers "roll forward" from grade level to grade level and are easier to identify (e.g. second grade enrollment for next year would be based on first grade enrollment this year using the *Weighted Cohort Survival Formula*).

While the finance department is using spreadsheets to project enrollment, the human resources department is gathering the "people" data by meeting with each building principal to discuss trends in their schools. Principals share information about the neighborhoods they serve and other information which is used to project enrollment. The finance and human resources departments independently project an enrollment number for the upcoming year and then meet to compare and reconcile projections. For the 2007/08 school year, this process yielded almost identical projections of 11,833 and 11,838. The district is historically conservative when projecting enrollment. For next year, the district is projecting about a 2% enrollment growth rate.

#### **Answers to Facilities Questions – Dave Jackman, Director of Auxiliary Services**

Dave addressed the list of questions generated during the April 30 committee meeting, as follows:

1. **What is Level of Service and how is it determined?** – "Level of Service" is a description of the instructional program a district offers its students, expressed in terms of how much space is required to offer the district's program to each student. Each school district determines its own level of service. The Level of Service (LOS) is typically expressed in terms of either "class size" or "square feet per student". Central Valley uses "square feet per student." The State of Washington also uses square feet per student for its purposes. The LOS number for each educational level (elementary, middle, high) includes hallways, computer labs, libraries and other common areas needed to educate students. Facilities for special education students are included in the LOS numbers.

Central Valley's LOS numbers (elementary = 101; middle = 148; high = 150) are derived from the specifications of the district's most modern schools at each level: Liberty Lake Elementary (1998), Greenacres Middle School (2004) and the two high schools (2002). These schools are designed to offer a contemporary educational program to students. If a school adds more students, the LOS is not recalculated. Instead, the school is considered "over capacity."

Dave supplied handouts entitled *Level of Service*.

2. **How does CVSD's level of service compare with other high performing districts?** – Dave's *Level of Service* handout contained comparison information. LOS is typically only defined by growing districts, such as Mead and Central Valley (because only growing districts need a way to determine when space limitations inhibit quality of education). LOS figures for both Mead and Central Valley are included on the handout. They are quite similar. Dave also included

the national averages. Dave stressed that “level of service” can change over time as a school district’s instructional program changes (e.g. before computers there was no need to allow space or build technical infrastructure in buildings).

- 3. Once the district passes a bond, how long will it take to build a new school?** – It would take approximately 18 to 36 months depending on the size of the facility and whether an existing design can be used. If CVSD uses the Liberty Lake Elementary design (to house 600 students), it would take about 18 months to build a new elementary school. To design and build a new middle school would take 27-30 months, from start to finish. It would take about three years to design and build a new high school.

Dave mentioned that our current high schools (which opened in 2002) were planned to house up to 1,800 students. This maximum size was a Board decision based on community input.

- 4. Discuss the option to lease classroom space from other school districts or space in commercial buildings and share what has been done in the past –** At one time, East Valley School District leased Barker Center (now the Kindergarten Center) from Central Valley for a nominal amount. East Valley students were housed there for one year. It is certainly possible for Central Valley to seek the use of space from another school district, such as East Valley. However, this would be a board-level discussion.

Leasing space in commercial buildings to educate students can be done, but there are several considerations:

- Leasing costs cannot be paid from the Capital Projects Fund. Instead leasing costs must come from the General Fund (operations).
- Life safety codes for schools are very strict. There would be considerable cost to prepare a leased space to house school students.
- Funds spent to improve a leased space for students and then to lease the space cannot be recovered when the lease expires.

Two years ago, Dave looked at quite a few vacant buildings in Central Valley as the possible site for Barker High School. He found that most sites were available only for lease (not for sale) and the costs (to improve and lease the facilities) were prohibitive.

- 5. What has been done to recapture the use of the old University High School for regular K-12 use? Why does the state say the district cannot use this space?** This question generated a fair amount of discussion. Essentially, Washington Administrative Code (WAC) sets forth the *Replacement Option* rules in WAC 392-347-042. Dave provided copies of this WAC to the committee.

Dave shared the background on this site. By the late 1990s, it was clear that the 24-acre site of the original University High School was too small and had poor road access. (With a 61-acre site, Central Valley High is located on a major roadway). The Board decided to move University High school to a larger and more accessible site. The old U-High was eligible for state modernization funds but the Board decided not to spend the money on the old facility. Instead, the Board replaced the old U-High space through “new construction in lieu of

modernization” and accepted the state funding to help build the new school. This means that the old U-High building is “off the rolls.” It does not exist for regular instructional purposes in the eyes of the state. CVSD must follow the rules of WAC 392-347-042 as related to the old U-High building. The WAC is as follows:

- The existing building or space to be replaced will not be used for district instructional purposes
- The existing building or space will be ineligible for any future state financial assistance
- If the existing building or space is subsequently returned by the district to instructional purposes in whole or in part, the district shall become ineligible for any state construction financial assistance for a period of ten years

The WAC allows districts to request a waiver. In the past, Central Valley has successfully received a waiver which allowed us to use the site for four years during our remodeling of Adams, McDonald, South Pines and Greenacres MS. We were able to house the entire student body of each school at the site while the home school was temporarily unavailable.

The state defines “district instructional purposes” as K-12 education. When clarification has been requested, Central Valley has been told that the district **may not house any K-12 students at the site**. The district is now housing nearly all of the district’s pre-school programs (ECEAP and Special Education), all child care and adult education programs, and the Native American Program offices in the old University High School building. The district has also relocated a portion of its bus fleet to the site to serve schools on the west side of the district.

As Central Valley enrollment has grown, the district has repeatedly gone to the state to ask about using a portion of the old U-high for K-12 education. The answer has consistently and clearly been “no.” The authority for this decision is with OSPI.

If we were to ignore the rules and begin using the old U-High again, the state would place the building’s square footage back “on the rolls.” The district would also forgo ten years of state aid for all schools. There would be no money to modernize the 45-year-old building.

The district currently leases about 34,000 square feet of the building’s 159,222 square feet to Valley Christian School. Valley Christian pays about \$11,000 per month for the lease, which the district uses to cover part of the building operational costs. This is a win-win situation because the district would have to pay utilities and overhead costs anyway, due to the district’s use of portions of the building.

6. **What is the size (square ft) of the district’s administration building (Learning & Teaching Center) and what would be needed to turn the building into a school?** The administration building is 149,500 square feet. Of this, about 100,000 square feet are shops and warehouse space. The building was originally built in 1979 as a manufacturing facility. It was modernized for office use in 1987. Dave said the building is located in a light industrial zone next to a freeway that separates it from the school population (creating an access

issue). Neither condition is ideal for a school location. He said that for the district to turn it into a school, much of the building would need to be gutted and rebuilt to meet the strict life safety codes which govern school buildings and classroom design rather than office space.

7. **What property does the district currently own for future school sites?** Dave provided a handout, *CVSD Reserve Sites – May 2007*. He then reviewed the list of future school sites owned by the district. There are five sites including sites for future elementary and middle schools, as well as the site the for the district's third high school. There are also two existing school sites with room for expansion (Barker High and Progress Elementary). The district is currently pursuing an option to purchase one additional site, for a future elementary school. There were questions about why the district purchased and held these sites. Dave explained that it is fiscally prudent and important for school districts to acquire future school sites long before they are needed, when the land is relatively inexpensive and available.
8. **What square ft/student number does the state use to decide if a school district is over capacity and may be eligible for state capital funds? How does this apply to CVSD?** – The state does not have a specific square foot per student space standard. WAC 392-343-035 describes the “student space allocations” (SSA) for various grade levels to be used in determining eligibility for state matching money. The state allocations are: elementary - 90 sq. ft/student; middle – 117 sq. ft/student; high – 130 sq. ft/student. (National averages listed on the *Level of Service* handout are: Elementary – 100 sq. ft/student; Middle – 130 sq. ft/student; High – 150 sq. ft/student.)

Dave said that the state uses these figures as a financial tool to control their financial obligations to school districts. He said that these “lowball” numbers “bear no relation to reality.” He handed out a copy of an e-mail from OSPI’s Gary Miller who says that “most all school districts and school designers will attest that these SSA levels fall far short of actual “programmatic” needs of most districts.

Applying these standards to the district’s high schools, in order for CVSD to be eligible for state matching money to build the third high school, both CVHS and U-High would each need to be several hundred students over capacity and showing a growing enrollment trend.

9. **What is the cost and process to install portable classrooms?** The meeting time expired before Dave could answer this question. But, he was prepared to share the following information: In 2005, the School Board directed the move of three duplex ( two classrooms) portable classrooms already owned by the district, from their location at University Center (the old U-High) and North Pines to new locations at Liberty Lake Elementary, Greenacres Elementary and University High School. These portables are not equipped with running water but do have electricity, audio and video jacks. The process involved moving each portable, setting the portable on new foundation, preparing the receiving site, connecting utilities and restoring the sending site. The cost to complete this process was about \$130,000 per portable.

Dave responded to several additional questions:

- **What would it take to consolidate school districts?** With the approval of the School Boards of the involved districts, the next step would be to work through ESD 101.
- **What about Liberty Lake forming their own school district?** It is currently against state law to carve a new school district out of an existing district. Historically, the trend has been to reduce the number of districts, not to expand.
- **What are examples of “program” as related to level of service?** The district has established an instructional program which will produce well-rounded, well-developed students. Both CVSD and Mead are excellent school districts with similar instructional programs. In an ideal world the instructional program CVSD would offer at an elementary school would be:
  - There is not be more than one class in the gym at a time (several Central Valley schools now run two classes simultaneously)
  - There is a dedicated area for meals that requires minimal travel to and from food service areas to tables. Such an arrangement minimizes time needed by students, supervision and janitorial services.(Gymnasiums would be available all day for use by physical education classes). Currently, Liberty Lake runs three lunches in their commons area. Last year they ran four. Several schools without a commons area now have lunch in classrooms to free up the gymnasium for classes, which takes extra travel time to and from the meal preparation/service area to the classrooms, creates an extra mess requiring more intensive janitorial services and requires more staff time for student supervision.
  - There is adequate space for specialists to work with students – special needs, music, art, etc.
  - There is only one class at a time in the library (several Central Valley schools now run two classes simultaneously)
  - Each school has a dedicated room for a computer labWhen enrollment exceeds a school’s capacity, there is pressure to reduce or eliminate parts of the instructional program. School capacity then limits student learning.

### **Process – Where do we go from here?**

The committee discussed next steps including strategies to communicate the information shared during the meeting with the rest of the community. They began to expand their discussion to include telling the community about “the great things kids are doing” before Helen cautioned the group about “scope creep” and the need for them to guard their time in order to accomplish the charge set forth by the Board.

Several committee members expressed concern about the amount of time remaining to accomplish the great deal of work needed. Members agreed to come to the next meeting ready to sort through the options and form subgroups to begin to research options. Shannan Skidmore volunteered to draft a template which could be used by each subgroup to add consistency to the process and make it easier to compile the final report. She will share this template at the next committee meeting.

**Next Meeting:** Monday, May 21 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at Adams Elementary.