Futures Team 5+6

INTRODUCTION

The Futures Team resumed its work on March 5th and 6th, with these workshops focused on finalizing the work on defining the future school, and developing the facilities implications of the Educational Vision. The first order of business was to discuss the "homework" assignment: the new book "The Global Achievement Gap", which questions high school education today in the perspective of contemporary global relevancy.

THE GLOBAL ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Tony Wagner's new book had been read by Futures Team members since the last workshop. They worked in small groups to address these questions relative to Wayland High School:

- Is it useful to our work?
- Is it challenging to our work

The overwhelming answer was "Useful." Here are the details:

TABLE TEAM 1

- 7 Basic Skills
  - Seek relevance
  - Make skills clear to students
  - Exemplify through content
- Critical thinking
- Virtual classroom
  - Teacher becomes digital
- New tools to gain information
  - Progression
- Balance through trans

TABLE TEAM 2

- Recommendation
- **Values = curriculum – both are important**
  - Value

    - Skills
    - Curriculum
    - Self-determination
    - Self-discipline
    - Self-confidence
- Society is changing quickly. Are we giving our students the necessary survival skills?

TABLE TEAM 3

- Critical thinking – does it require foundation?
- Denmark, yes, but why does everyone want to come here?
- How do you measure greatness?
    - At WHS?
    - Globally?
- Bristling teachers
    - Classroom realities
    - Wagner – dated or jump to conclusion?
- Is Wagner talking about WHS?
    - WHS Mission Statement and MTA Today

TABLE TEAM 4

- Concept of HS ed 1920s/30s + criticized in Europe but moved US ahead in others
- Importance of critical thinking
- Technology doesn't take place at core learning/but allows global connection + global learning
- Video gaming + scientific method
- 21st Century skills – new label for current value?
    - Reaction to standards based learning + testing
        - Can pendulum go to middle rather than full swing?
- PowerPoint essay vs authentic writing due to ease of evaluation
- 21st Century teaching vs Pioneer
- Teacher prep – history + theory
    - Little practical application
- Business leaders' requests
- Tests for good citizenship
- ***Jury ready!
    - (plus)

TABLE TEAM 5

Useful:

- Focusing on motivating kids in the digital age
    - Teaching building blocks
        - What does this mean?

Concern:

- Balancing continuous partial attention with ability to focus on one task
    - How do we in HS education teach this?
        - More than just academic

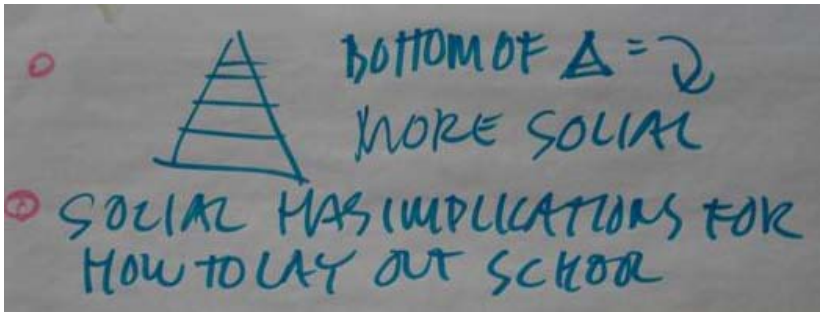
TABLE TEAM 6

- Critical needs + problem solving
- Collaboration/coaching by influence
- Agility/adaptability
- Initiative/entrepreneurism
- Effective oral/written communication
- Access/analyze information
- Curiosity/imagination

GENERAL DISCUSSION

- This book is about:
    - Skills!
    - Values changing – changing student values
    - Can this change be done while "sprinting to finish line? (ie, content-based standards)"
- How do we get to critical thinking?
- How to balance?
- Test for good citizenship?
- Concept of 21st C skills
    - Is this new words for old stuff?

- Video gaming!
- Process can be applied to later learning
- Angst! No time to do this
- Have culture where constant questions
- Whittier Regional Voc – great measure of success
- Need to get this discussion to teachers in spirit of very good school improving itself
- Motivating students
- Building blocks
- Difficult to do this alone
- Need to lesson pressure on teachers to get successful change
- Doesn't provide enough time to allow kids to do "good" failure. We are forcing perfection
    - Too much content focused time
- Lots to be celebrated at WHS
- How do we communicate all this good stuff?
- How do we structure the next steps with this?
    - Change is process, not event
    - Need time
    - Catalogue current initiatives
        - Which to do/which to "hold"
- School is "parenting" to fill in needs
    - Best learning experiences happen outside classroom
    - Could be helpful as reality check
- Positive school culture + teachers interested in listening to kids
    - Kids "own" education
- Next shows pyramid with note "bottom of pyramid = more social?
- Social has implications for how to lay out school



- Right now these results are preliminary. There is insufficient data to be conclusive. This questionnaire could be used as a starting point for regular student attitude surveys
- Might be used for MS kids coming into WHS
- Reflection for kids

STUDENT SURVEY

Frank Locker characterized his meeting with students and the questionnaire that was developed to follow up to the meeting.. Major insights:

- School is interactive + social to most students. Keep it that way!
- To reduce the achievement gap, students need to have to have personal relationship with teachers
- There is richness in students' qualitative comments:

TEACHER MEETING #3

Frank Locker reported on the previous day's teacher/staff ,meeting.

- Some teachers questioned Frank's characterization that WHS was a good school, and needed focused attention to become great.. They thought it was already great
- Project Based Learning is already "part" of delivery
- Balance of new + past
- Teachers say they are not resistant to change
- 21st C learning

- Freshman House idea not well received
- Teachers feel they are not stakeholders in this process
  - Have not been given opportunity to discuss
- Communication could be improved:
  - Maybe Open House between E.T. + faculty
  - Maybe WIKI

A teacher/staff meeting has been set for Wednesday March 11 to review the developing Educational Specifications.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A table team rewrote the Guiding Principles from the draft that had been presented at the teacher/staff meeting. The revised draft is:

These Guiding Principles distill the findings of the Wayland High School Futures Team. The 57-member strong Futures Team included administrators, teachers, students, parents, educational experts and many Wayland residents. The Futures Team met in a series of 6 intensive, day-long working sessions over the first three months of 2009. The Futures Team examined educational trends, best practices and issues affecting the delivery of a rigorous and relevant education. The Guiding Principles are not policy but address the overarching themes that serve as a foundation for a world-class educational experience for Wayland High School students well into the 21st Century. As such, they are intended to inform educational delivery, educational structure and facilities planning.

1. Education for All

- A focus on meeting learning needs of students who are hard to reach, will also be effective in meeting the needs of all students.
- Personalized learning and student-centered instruction recognize individuals' abilities and special needs.
-

2. Learning and Instructional Strategies

- Increasing student engagement in learning is a high priority for Wayland High School.
- Interdisciplinary learning approach is valued by Wayland High School
- Teaching methods recognize the multiple intelligences of different students, and are differentiated to reach all students.
- Content-area-based curriculum standards will continue.
- Project-based learning is a part of instructional delivery.
- Expand opportunities for deep, exploratory, personalized student learning, such as independent studies and senior projects
- Project-based learning provides engaging and highly relevant learning. Project-based learning experiences can be created in a variety of formats, both short and long term, classroom-based, community-based and team taught.
- Open- ended, active learning contributes significantly to student participation and to retention of knowledge.
- Student collaboration fosters communication skills and the ability to work with others and fosters emotional intelligence.
- Creative thinking is an integral component of all activities.
- Integration of curricula across content areas will drive educational delivery tactics, facility organization, and space planning.
- SLC can allow concentrated attention to segments of the school population e.g. freshman, departments and interdisciplinary groups.
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3. Technology

- To meet the learning needs of all students, align with 21st Century skills, and support engaged learning,

WHS needs to constantly re-evaluate itself as a "classical" high school experiences for students

- Plan for distance learning and virtual learning e Increased use of virtual learning tools will reinforce the need for collaborative spaces and learning techniques which will facilitate social experience for students and staff.

4. Extended Learning beyond the School

- Community service learning programs and internships provide critical learning and social experiences for all students that greatly increase opportunities for success in both the short and long-term futures, and should be included in an integrated high school curriculum.
- Foster dual enrollments with college level programs.
- Community members (including retired persons and businesses) are a valuable resource and can be engaged as active volunteers in the schools, as experts, tutors, mentors and guides.
- Community based internships and service activities provide unique opportunities for students, as well as greater visibility of WHS in the community.
- Fostering community placements for student learning requires structure and leadership.
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5. Implementation and Professional Development

- Wayland High School is a place of continuous improvement through self-evaluation, professional learning, controlled risk-taking, and measurement of results.
- Professional staff development is a critical component in effectively carrying out the educational concepts outlined here.
- WHS will establish study teams and explore Pilot Projects, such as an advisor/advisee program, to support continued development
- Professional development related to increasing a teacher's knowledge of each student and the ability to meet individuals' needs should be a primary component of staff development.
- Team teaching encouraged through staff development, school leadership, and collegial planning offers many benefits for both teachers and students,
- Teacher collaboration including shared data analysis, mentoring, common planning time, classroom preparation, and content expertise, improves educational delivery.
- Authentic instruction and assessment connect teachers and students to the real world and makes learning meaningful e.g. portfolios, senior projects, autobiographies.

6. Administration

- Accessible administration and guidance invites engagement with students and the public.

7. Educational Structure and Facilities Planning

- Facilities designed with flexibility allow a variety of school organizational structures over time.
- Facilities allow and facilitate multiple organizations at one time. e.g. freshman houses, theme based houses.
- Facilities support interdisciplinary learning through the strategic placement of teachers and appropriate learning spaces.
- Flexibly designed facilities support different teaching/learning modalities.
- Facilities provide passive observation of students engaged in independent learning activities.
- Small Learning Communities are identifiable and contiguous, and be destinations rather than "flow

through" spaces, but not so separate as to be isolating.

- Invest in a state of the art technology infrastructure with as much wireless capability as possible.
- Locate administration and guidance within, or as near as possible to, the core learning spaces.
- Create project centers for student use, equipped with appropriate furniture and tools for making things, reproduction, storage, etc.
- Create well equipped places for students' project presentations.
- Student workstations and storage support long term research oriented project-based learning.
- Space priorities include appropriate space for independent student learning.
- Support teacher collaboration through Teacher Planning Centers, equipped with workspaces, reproduction tools, technology and storage.
- Create a building design that reflects both the positive effects of a campus plan and the need for increased security and energy conservation.
- Explore the possibility of reassigning portions of the building to compatible non-school uses as a contingency for future lower enrollments and/or additional spaces.
- Learning is a social activity. Create spaces throughout the school which support informal student gathering.
- Celebrate Arts learning and STEM learning through special, strategically located places for display, presentations, and/or significant symbols.

FACILITY IMPLICATIONS

Considerable effort was focused on translating the Educational Vision into facilities implications. Futures Team members worked in program area focus group to articulate needs and desires, formulated as requests, outlined below.

Interspersed in that work were discussions of overall issues:

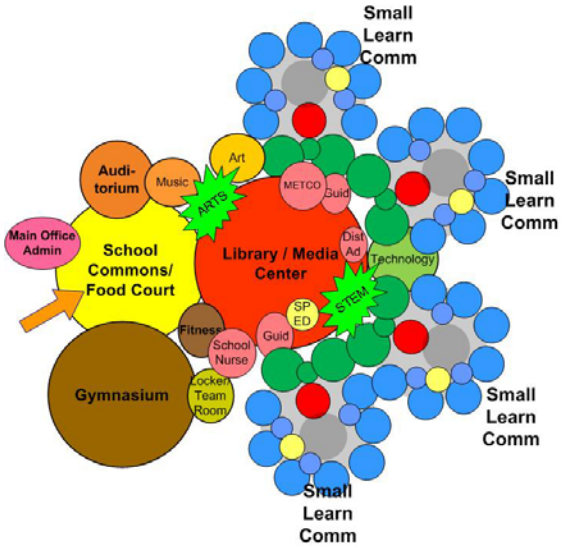
OVERALL PLANNING

- Gym – weekend use?
  - Noise?
- Auditorium – public use?
- Technology at Gym – why?
- Nurse/Guidance should be close to kids
- Outdoor space is very valuable
- Do we really need a freshman house? The building planning should allow it if desired. The decision then becomes one of policy and administration, not one "locked into place" by facilities
- Freshman House – maybe not a place
  - Transition year
  - Advisor/advisee programs could be a great asset

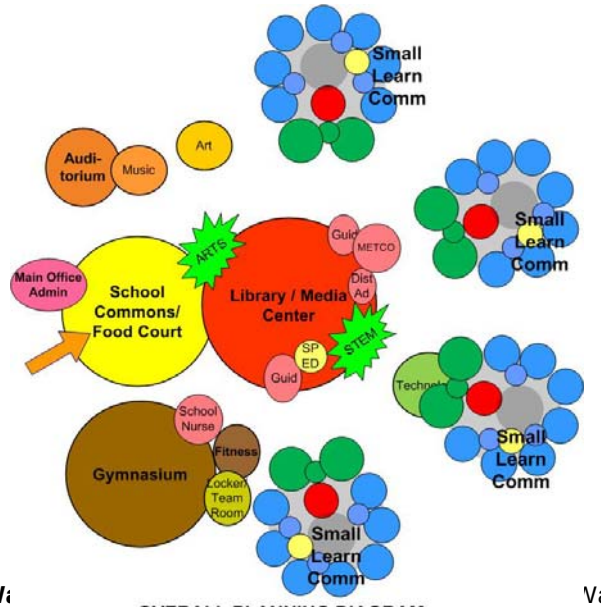
OVERALL PLANNING DIAGRAMS

The Futures Team reviewed three prepared overall planning diagrams that characterized critical program area relationships. They created a fourth. The diagrams are:
CONCEPT 1: Single building
CONCEPT 2: Multiple separated buildings
CONCEPT 3: Two separated buildings
CONCEPT 4: A building with an all-school open assembly space at it's center.

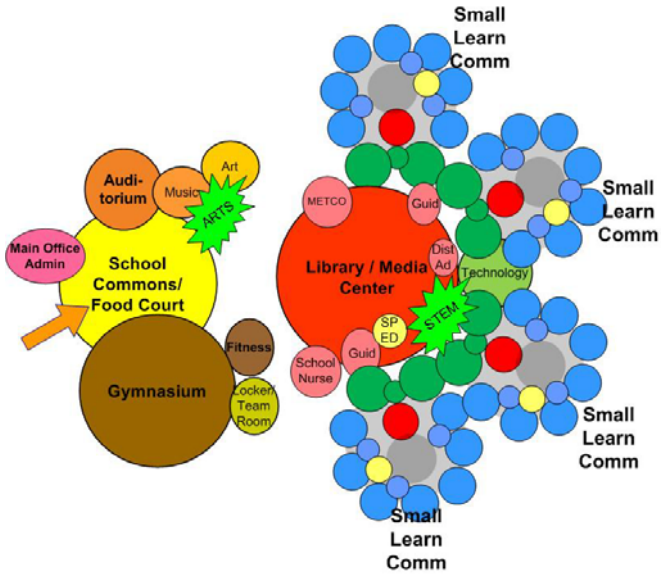
An informal vote was taken by table team. Results are below.



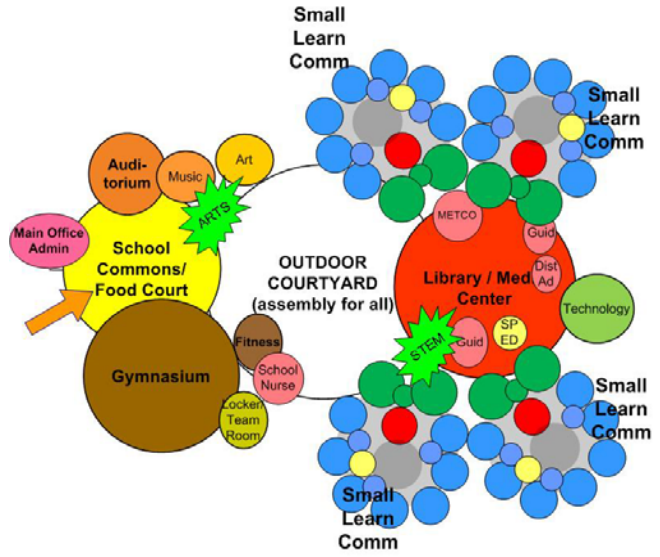
OVERALL PLANNING CAMPUS CONCEPT 1



OVERALL PLANNING DIAGRAM CAMPUS CONCEPT 2



OVERALL PLANNING DIAGRAM CAMPUS CONCEPT 3



OVERALL PLANNING DIAGRAM CAMPUS CONCEPT 4

THE VOTE
All six table teams voted for Concept 4, although one voted for 4 + 1.

PROGRAM AREA REQUESTS

As noted above, lengthy consideration was given to program area needs and desires, which are presented here as space requests. They will be incorporated in the Space Needs spreadsheets as best practicable. They will be reviewed by the teachers and staff.

There are inherently conflicts in the requests. An administrative team led by the principal has been established to reconcile differences and make judgments relative to the Educational Vision. Program area requests are as follows:

ADMINISTRATION/GIDANCE/NURSE
Presented in diagram form, the critical idea is that these functions should be at the heart of the school, easy for students to access. They are shown immediately adjacent to the Library/Media Center.

Nurse should also be adjacent to the Fitness Room and athletics.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION
Not currently a formal program area, this grouping of spaces was identified to support 21st Century skills, foster project-based learning, and offer relevant applied learning opportunities not currently offered.

Requests were presented as space lists.

Space name/Program Area

Multimedia	
Photography	
H. Comp. Science	1500SF
Drama/Sets	
Fabrication/Engineering	2200SF
Wkshp: Drama/Robotics	
Project Room (Science teachers)	1400SF
TV/Video Lab	1500SF
Business Lab	1000SF
Music/Art Lab	
(7,600)	

ARTS

The arts focus group also presented their concepts as space lists.

Music

Band	2200SF
Orchestra/Chorus	2000SF
(Meet at same time)	
Instrument storage	350SF
Practice rooms	160SF
Music Library	200SF
Ensemble room	350SF
Keyboard space/storage	250SF
Ref digital lab	
Uniform storage (locked)	

Drama/Theatre/Dance

(Lots of classes are over scheduled – larger space needed)

Auditorium	600 seats
Needs to be as large as possible	
Dressing rooms not needed if locker rooms can be used	
Wing/storage space	
Sound/light stations within the house	
Stage	2000 SF
Set Design	Physical building space
Sound/Lights	Control Booth
Classroom (separate) (could be used as dressing room/multi-use)	
Performance classroom	
*Garage door – for sets, etc.	

Art/Design/3D/Etc

2 rooms: Drawing/Painting
1 rooms: Design: Graphic Arts/Digital/Web
1 room: Ceramic/Jewelry/3D
1 Photo/Film/Video

Gallery space throughout the school + video monitors

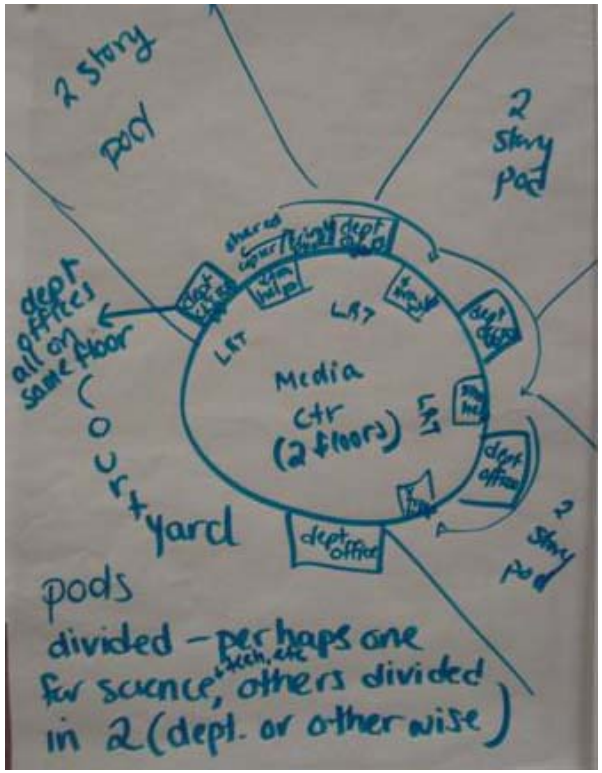
CORE ACADEMIC/SMALL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

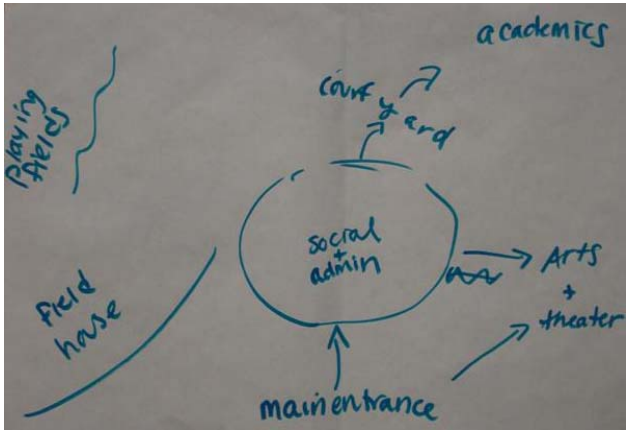
This focus group developed the concept that certain functions are best placed in a "ring" around the Library/Media Center, offering greater flexibility and access for teachers and students.

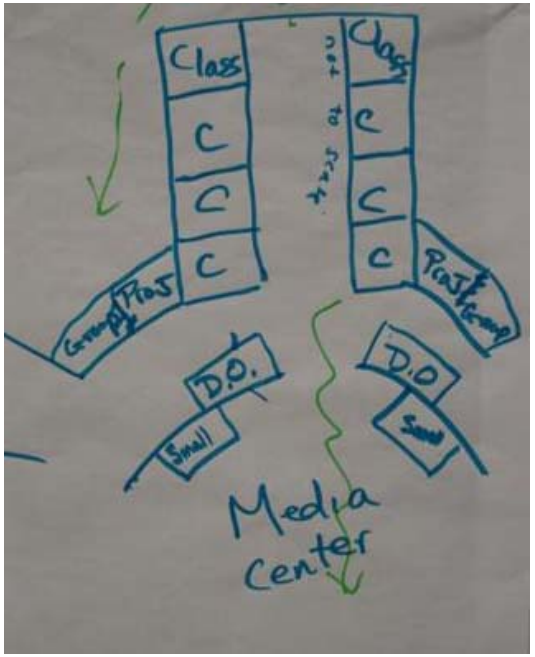
Two floors + rooftop (solar panels – green house)

- **Media Center**
  - 1 floor – small group rooms
    - Join department offices
    - LRT, Library
  - 2nd floor – Academic centers
    - Computer technology, METCO
- **Science "wing"**
  - 1st floor – Bio + Chem
  - 2nd floor – Physics, Phys Sci, Robotics + English Labs
- **Wings**

- 1st – English 2nd – Soc Sci
- 1st – Math 2nd – Language

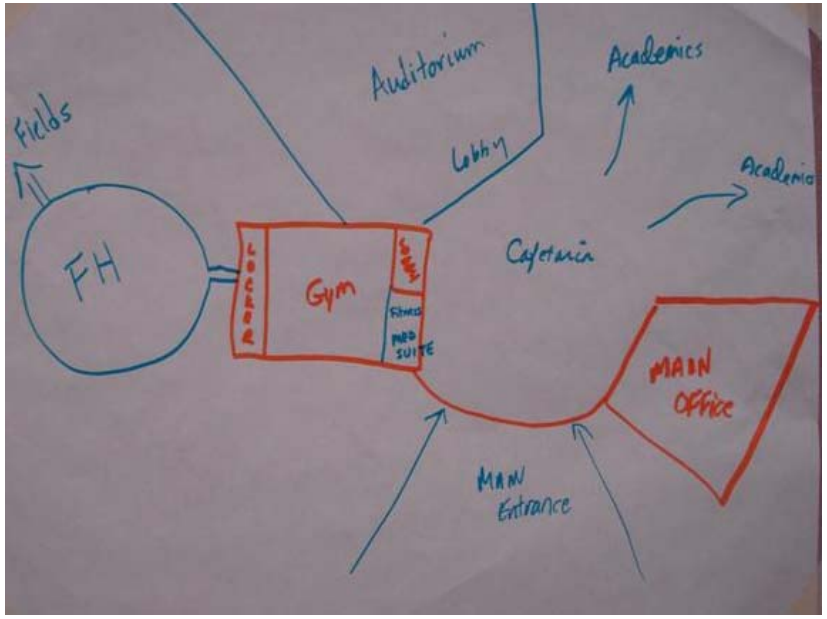






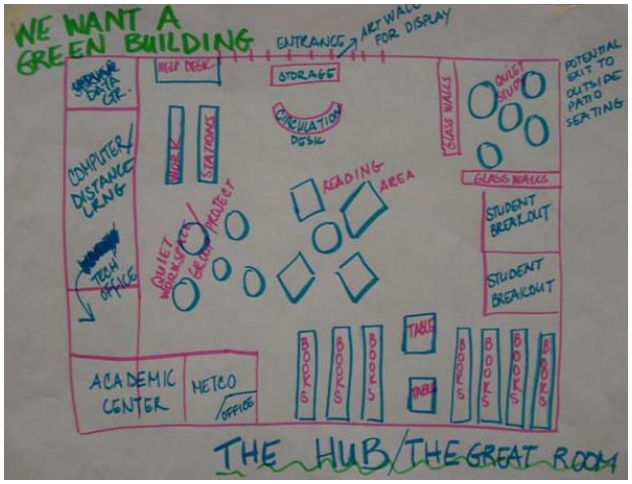
- **Small Group Rooms**
  - Fewer of them but more centrally located to the Media Center – large enough to be divided + shared
  - Take extra space + create more regular classrooms b/c more classrooms seem to be needed based on current classroom use
  - Move as much common space as possible from pod to Media Center to encourage interdisciplinary
  - Within pods (except Science) rooms as flexible as possible
  - Separate chairs/desks to allow different room orientations
  - Prefer window orientation outside rather than to common space to lower distraction

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ATHLETICS



LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

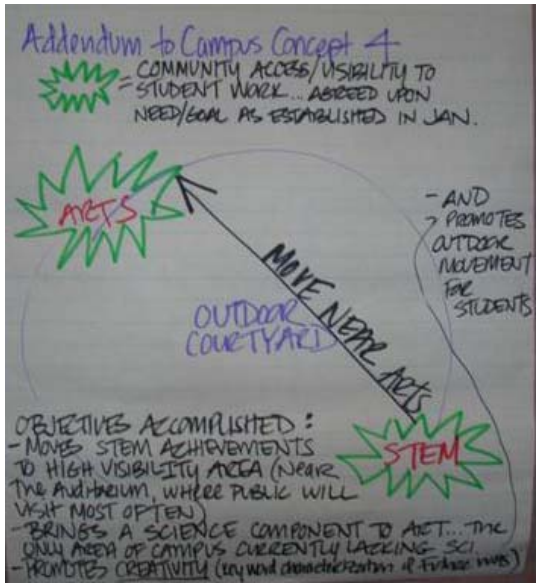
This group confirmed the idea of the Library/Media Center as a "hub" of the school



"STARBURSTS"

The overall planning diagrams have two "starbursts" on them. These signify the need to make learning visible. Proposed are ways of celebrating student achievement in Arts and In STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

The focus groups gave consideration to the best ways of achieving this. The Arts group preferred physical and virtual displays throughout the school. The STEM group preferred expression in a highly trafficked area, such as in the School Commons/Food Court.



COMMUNICATION

A communications focus group identified next steps.

Tactics	**Schedule**
1. "Change of heart" letter	Steve 3/12 Crier
2. Futures Team guest column	3/19 Crier
3. Education Why schools are Important	Foster 3/26 Crier

4. Viral e-mails from each Futures Team Member linking to above
5. Individual letters