

# ***Facilities Community Task Force Report***

*Prepared for the Arrowhead UHS Board of Education*

*May 4, 2011*





# **Arrowhead UHS District Facilities Vision Statement**

*October 12, 2010*

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*“Something For Everyone”*

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## **Our Vision for Facilities**

The Arrowhead Union High School District, in partnership with the community, provides challenging learning experiences for students in a safe and supportive environment. We are committed to academic excellence, social responsibility, and life-long learning. Our success is demonstrated by the achievement of our students and their positive participation in society. Arrowhead High School will provide a clean, orderly, safe, cost-effective, and instructionally supportive school environment that contributes to the school district's mission of educating our children to meet the intellectual, physical, and emotional demands of the 21st century.

## **Our Facility Related Commitments**

- To provide facilities appropriate to meet the demands of our school's student enrollment, academic programming and co/extra-curricular offerings.
- To provide facilities that meet the needs of the 21st century learner and support our staff as they adapt to create relevant, engaging, and self-directed learning opportunities for all students.
- To provide facilities which support dynamic and evolving K-12 curriculum, programs, and technology.
- To provide long-term construction design solutions that support flexible and adaptable learning environments and prepare students for a global and ever-changing future.
- To create and maintain safe, secure, and accessible physical environment that supports the instructional program, staff, students, and community members who utilize school facilities and grounds.
- To provide cost effective, energy efficient, and sustainable facilities.
- To provide value to all stakeholders by maximizing efficiencies and collaboration, while addressing the current and future learning needs of our students.

# Executive Summary

## Facilities Community Task Force Make Up

- The Facilities Community Task Force (FCT) included representatives from all seven Arrowhead feeder schools, parents of current/former/future students, and community members.
- Twelve 2-hour meetings were held over 7 months, starting in October 2010.
- The FCT was tasked with producing prioritized recommendations relative to district facilities and presenting those recommendations to the Arrowhead UHS Board of Education.

## FCT History and Process

- As early as 2006, Arrowhead UHS began actively exploring facility needs, taking into account input from parents, the Arrowhead Area 2020 initiative, the Arrowhead Center for the Arts task force, and finally from the Facilities Community Task force.
- The FCT gathered and analyzed information about current facilities, levels of classroom utilization, enrollment projections, and educational directions.
- The FCT identified a wide spectrum of facility-related needs that were ranked, grouped into categories, and revised based on input and discussion over the course of several meetings.
- The FCT brainstormed solutions to address identified needs and formulated these as recommendations. The recommendations were then prioritized by vote.

## FCT Recommendations

Each voting member ranked the recommendations on a scale of 5 (highest priority) to 1 (lowest priority), with the option of ranking any or all items with a 0 (or “abstain”). An “abstain” vote indicates a member could not endorse that specific recommendation. Appendix A contains supporting details and specifics for these five recommendations; Appendix B shows voting results used in prioritization.

- 1. Educational Fine Arts Recommendation:** Arrowhead UHS needs to accommodate its current and growing educational programs by adding fine arts classroom and performance spaces. A modern, fully functional theater that can accommodate a greater number of people is needed, along with classroom, rehearsal, and storage spaces for all fine arts programs. **Ranking: 1** (average rank = 3.53, 3 abstain votes)
- 2. Field House Recommendation:** Arrowhead UHS needs to improve facilities to house “all-school” events and current athletic, phy-ed and intramural programs that are running at maximum capacity for space and time. The West gym at North Campus was built as 1/3 of a complete field house; the district should consider completion of the final 2/3. **Ranking: 2** (average rank = 3.32, 3 abstain votes)
- 3. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Recommendation:** Arrowhead UHS needs to take action on facility needs related to the Arrowhead Area 2020 initiative and create flexible learning spaces that can accommodate 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning opportunities for all students. **Ranking: 3** (average rank = 3.15, 2 abstain votes)
- 4. Aquatic Center Recommendation:** Arrowhead UHS needs to take action regarding the aging, inadequate, and unsafe aquatic center. The capacity, poor design, and high utilization of the current facility underscore the need for an updated aquatic center. **Ranking: 4** (average rank = 3.00, 4 abstain votes)
- 5. Logistics, People and Parking Recommendation:** Arrowhead UHS needs to improve traffic flow on campus for both people and vehicles. A traffic study should be conducted to identify roadway, pedestrian, and parking issues and address safety and capacity-related problems. The school should also work with the Village of Hartland/Town of Merton to resolve the “Campus Drive” bypass issue. **Ranking: 5** (average rank = 2.25, 2 abstain votes)

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# **I. FCT Charge**

## **(as given by the Arrowhead UHS School Board)**

The Arrowhead Union High School Board charges the *Facilities Community Task Force* (also known as the *FCT*) with serving in an advisory capacity to the school district during the fall of 2010 and spring of 2011 with the following primary tasks:

1. Assessing and prioritizing identified facilities and enrollment needs;
2. Developing potential solutions and/or options that address identified facilities needs and priorities as well as the district's educational program goals;
3. Assessing the financial implications of potential solutions and/or options that address identified facilities needs and priorities;
4. Reaching majority consensus (if possible) on prioritized advisory recommendations for the school board;
2. Preparing a written report of its findings and recommendations for presentation to the Arrowhead Union High school board and community;
3. Serving as information providers and key communicators to the community regarding any future action by the school board.

The *Facilities Community Task Force* (also known as the *FCT*) will consist of district residents representing all areas of our school district, some of whom may be faculty or staff. Serving as resources to the *FCT* will be the district's administrators, architects, contractors, financial advisor, and other professionals as needed. Additionally, the school board may identify one or two members to serve as liaisons to the *FCT* and report back to full board throughout the process. The *FCT* will convene in October 2010 and will meet two to three times per month as necessary with the goal of presenting its findings and advisory recommendations to the school board and the community in the spring of 2011.

## II. Committee Members

### ARROWHEAD HIGH SCHOOL FACILITIES COMMUNITY TASK FORCE (FCT) MEMBERS

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Elementary School District</u>
	Liz Arsnow	Stone Bank
	Ken Brunnbauer	Merton
	Angela Brzeczowski	Merton
	Richard Burnside	Merton
	Lisa Carey	Merton
	Joe Eberle	Richmond
	Mary Beth Eckels	Hartland-Lakeside
	Cindy Gardner	Hartland-Lakeside
	Kristin Graves	Swallow
	Craig Haase	North Lake
*Co-Chair	Tom Harter	Hartland-Lakeside
	Ginny Henningsen	Hartland-Lakeside
	Ronald Jacobs	Hartland-Lakeside
	Doug Johnson	Lake Country
	Martin Komondoros	Hartland-Lakeside
	John Kozlik	Merton
	Lew Krisberg	Richmond
	Fred Kuhn	Hartland-Lakeside
	John LaFleur	Merton
	Mike Langenkamp	Hartland-Lakeside
	Andy Matter	Hartland-Lakeside
	John Nelson	Swallow
*Co-Chair	David Newman	Stone Bank
	Jeff Radakovich	Hartland-Lakeside
	Ron Reinowski	Merton
	Tammy Retzlaff	Richmond
	Julie Reuteman	Stone Bank
	Parrish Sandefur	Stone Bank
	Deb Schaber	North Lake
	Paul Schneider	Merton
	Beth Sellner	Richmond
	Bill Slater	Swallow
	Christine Slowinski	North Lake
	Ginny Thorson	Merton
	Char Tubbs	Merton
	Jeff Vernon	Hartland-Lakeside
*Co-Chair	Anthony Waite	Hartland-Lakeside
	Mike Ward	Merton
	Steve & Terrie Willicombe	Swallow

### **III. Facilities Community Task Force (FCT) History**

Arrowhead Union High School is a school of national reputation for academic, community, athletic, and co-curricular excellence. Class offerings for students consist of nearly two hundred courses. In addition, the school sponsors 126 different extra-curricular activities. The school's creative approach to class scheduling and broad-reaching range of classes and programs supports the school's theme, "Something for Everyone."

In the fall of 2006, a parent group approached school administration and requested additional learning space for the school's fine arts programs. Although the initial focus was in the area of the performing arts, the group quickly realized that all 30 fine arts programs, classes, and clubs – with participation representing 45% of the student body – were struggling due to limited space.

In 2008, the eight Arrowhead area school districts launched the "2020 Vision" initiative. This initiative was designed to clarify requirements needed to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner. The recommendations made by this task force in 2010 created awareness at the Arrowhead Board of Education level that learning spaces must change if the school is to successfully implement this vision.

#### **Origin of the Facilities Community Task Force (FCT)**

Given this background, in September of 2010, the district announced its intent to form the *Facilities Community Task Force (FCT)* to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Education. In addition to examining facility needs for the school's fine arts programs, the board felt that the FCT should examine *all* school facilities in conjunction with current and projected enrollments, educational programs, and extra-curricular activities.

The district mailed an invitation postcard to all district households, issued a press release, and posted a call for volunteers on its web site to recruit members. More than 40 community members (representing all areas of the district) attended the first meeting in October 2010 to help the district assess and prioritize future facility needs.

## IV. FCT Approach

The task force met twice monthly from October 2010 through April 2011. During that time, Joe Donovan (Donovan Group LLC) acted as facilitator and Dave Newman as meeting chair. The group used the following 3-step process to develop recommendations for the Board of Education:

1. First, the FCT gathered and analyzed information about all Arrowhead UHS facilities, current facility-related issues, educational directions, enrollment projections, and levels of classroom utilization.
2. Next, the FCT identified a wide spectrum of needs that were ranked, grouped into categories, and revised based on members' input and discussion over the course of several meetings.
3. The FCT then brainstormed solutions relative to identified needs and formulated these as recommendations. The recommendations were then prioritized by vote.
4. The FCT drafted this report to summarize recommendations to the board.

During the process, the FCT consulted AHS internal and outside expert resources, including:

- Craig Jefson, AHS Superintendent, regarding campus facilities and the 2020 initiative (an effort by all local school districts to define curriculum direction).
- Steve Kopecky, AHS Business Manager, regarding enrollment projections and district finances.
- Bob Vajgrt and Kit Dailey, Eppstein Uhen Architects, regarding the FCT process, classroom capacity, and architectural directions.
- Craig Uhlenbrauck, Vice President of Marketing, and John Schneider, Project Executive, Miron Construction; regarding questions about building costs.
- Mike Clark, Robert W. Baird & Co., regarding the district's debt position and potential tax impacts of a referendum.

For meeting dates, meeting topics, attendance, and minutes, see Appendix C.



## V. FCT Discovery

The FCT proceeded to conduct a number of exploratory and discovery activities. The goals of these tasks were to obtain a better understanding of the current facilities and to allow smaller groups to research specific topics. This section documents the FCT's research and findings.

- a) **Campus tour:** In late October through early November 2010, FCT members were escorted on a campus tour (see Appendix D). The goal was to familiarize FCT members with the facilities, their limitations, and availability concerns. Some department heads were available and highlighted areas of need. It was clear that teachers and the administration have realized significant accomplishments within the constraints of the current facilities. It was also clear that, in many cases, limited space is not only inhibiting programs from expanding but is also a matter of student safety.
- b) **Facility utilization:** As a second step, the administration provided FCT members with information about building utilization. In general, larger group spaces, such as gymnasiums and the theater, were classified as "over-utilized," which means the space is in use more than 80% of the available day. Some special-use classrooms (such as science labs, FACE labs, and tech ed labs) are highly over-utilized. In addition, special education classrooms at South Campus are classified at 100% usage, and at North Campus at 60% and 90%. Almost 50% of total classrooms in all program areas are used over 80% or more each day. Appendix E contains the Building Utilization Analysis provided to the FCT.
- c) **Current and projected enrollment:** The FCT reviewed five enrollment projections: one from the district, one from Eppstein Uhen Architects (which included a land use analysis), and three from the Applied Population Lab. All projections indicated that enrollment is expected to increase from the current 2278 students over the next 5 – 10 years. Although the various enrollment studies lacked consensus to define a single level of growth, every study projected an increase. The FCT was also given open enrollment figures, which in 2010-2011 was 6.5% of the school population. To a school constrained today by space limitations, adding more students in the future will result in even greater program and safety issues. Appendix F includes the enrollment projections and open enrollment history.
- d) **21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning:** During the discovery phase, the FCT formed a study group to investigate 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning and its impact on facilities. In 2008 and 2009, all Arrowhead area school districts participated in the "2020 Vision" initiative, exploring what learning might look like in the year 2020. Mr. Jefson presented the initiative's results to the FCT.

The study group found that 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills emphasize collaboration, critical thinking, communication, global and civic responsibility, and the ability to research and synthesize information and its relationship to the world. 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environments support:

- Interactive groups that can range in size
- Location-independent learning and field experiences
- Mobile devices, podcasts, E-books, etc. that complement and expand learning
- Collaborative tools that facilitate learning teams and enable communication
- Creativity, innovation, and problem-solving ("right-brain" skills)

Appendix G contains the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning study group's presentation to the FCT. The FCT identified the following concerns relative to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning and current educational programs:

- 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning relies on spaces that are flexible and configurable, facilitating small as well as large group instruction and collaboration.
- Arrowhead UHS currently has minimal space dedicated to 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning initiatives and most classrooms instead follow a traditional layout.
- Technology plays a significant role in facilitating 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning, and a robust infrastructure is needed to support pervasive wireless access and instructional technologies.
- Today, learning spaces for special education students, especially at South Campus, are small and inadequate.

In addition to expanding space for special education, the FCT believes that converting or modifying some current spaces would be an effective way to begin implementing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning. The FCT acknowledges, however, that this depends on updated curricula and teachers trained and engaged in 21<sup>st</sup> Century instructional methods.

- e) Educational Fine Arts:** In the discovery phase, the FCT leveraged previous research by the Arrowhead Center for the Arts (ACA) Task Force ([www.arrowheadcenterforthearts.com](http://www.arrowheadcenterforthearts.com)). The ACA was formed in the spring of 2010 by several parents and community members to support the district with fund-raising efforts and to raise awareness about the need for enhanced fine arts facilities. A member of the ACA gave a presentation about the fine arts recommendation to the FCT (Appendix H).

The FCT identified the following concerns relative to fine arts:

- The current theater, which seats 447, is too small, based on both the size of programs and the school population. (Every student is required to take 2 semesters of fine arts. Participation is 1320 students in visual arts, 450 in choir, 270 in instrumental, and 54 in Broadway Company.)
- Theater utilization exceeds the maximum, inhibiting growth in fine arts programs and local community involvement.
- A "black box" theater, typical in theater training programs, is also lacking.
- Events at North Campus and the theater consistently challenge community fire and building code standards.
- Practice and rehearsal space is inadequate. (Choir and band rehearsals must often be split.) At the same time, space for fine arts programs is underutilized since it is duplicated at both campuses.
- Acoustics in the band rehearsal room are poor and lack resonance.
- Storage space for educational materials, instruments, and props is inadequate.
- Exhibition space for the visual arts is lacking. Visual arts classrooms at South Campus suffer from poor layout (students must pass through one classroom to get to another).
- The teaching staff has a desire and vision to do more, but is limited by available space.

Because of these shortcomings, Arrowhead UHS may be missing opportunities to expand instruction by offering either a publicly funded arts program or a fine arts charter school. In addition, Arrowhead has the potential to be recognized for excellence across all aspects of the educational experience – Academics, Athletics, and the Arts.

- f) Aquatic Center:** Research by the FCT identified an aging and inadequate aquatic center. Built in the early 1970s, the 6-lane pool was originally designed for a school enrollment far below current numbers and does not meet the 8-lane minimum standard for swim meets. The facility has a maximum capacity of 288, while the bleachers are capable of holding 300. These limitations impact the school's ability to host competitions and local swim clubs.

The aquatic center is a potential source of revenue. An adequate facility can be rented by swim clubs for practices and large area meets. Many of these events and club activities are currently held elsewhere because of the poor condition and capacity constraints of the Arrowhead pool.

The FCT identified the following concerns relative to the pool:

- Inadequate practice space and time available for high school teams. The size of teams is limited due to insufficient pool lane space.
- Inadequate space available on deck to accommodate swimmers, coaches, & lifeguards.
- Poor access to locker rooms (individuals must walk on deck through swimmers waiting behind starting blocks).
- Storage space for physical education classes is limited and inadequate.
- Office/meeting space is needed for all programs using the pool to accommodate coaches, officials, and team meetings.
- The diving board area is "grandfathered" into current WISCA rules.
- The dive team does not have warm water tank available and currently uses a large plastic tub (divers submerge prior to their event to prevent injury from cold muscles)
- No booth available for meet scoring system (Colorado). Sensitive computer system must be set up on deck in humid pool conditions.
- District is missing revenue opportunities.
- District is unable to accommodate community needs (swim lessons, open swim, and club activities).

- g) Field House:** In 2000-2001, 1/3 of a proposed field house (now called the West gym) was added to North Campus. The gym was constructed so that at a future time, the north wall could be removed and the balance of the field house constructed (additional 2/3). At that time there was a student population of 1,943 with students participating in phy-ed classes and 397 athletes using that space. Enrollment has grown to 2,278 students, with 1,594 in phy-ed classes and 600 athletes who use that space. An additional 350-450 students play intramural sports in the gym and groups like the Arrowhead Basketball Club and Lake Country Volleyball rent open time with about 190 athletes.

The research by the FCT found that Arrowhead no longer has one facility that can hold all students for assemblies or indoor graduation. The gyms are used to capacity on most days during the school year and during summer. Because of the nature of the building (being only 1/3 of its intended capacity), there are currently space, storage and safety issues.

The FCT identified the following concerns relative to the field house:

- Arrowhead does not have a space large enough to hold indoor WIAA sectional events for wrestling, basketball, and volleyball, nor an indoor track area for the 350 spring track athletes.
- During crossover seasons like March, basketball practice occurs in the East gym while 200 track and field boys try to squeeze in the West gym and 160 female athletes use the commons area.
- Volleyball judging stands, equipment bins, and ball cages line the West gym walls along with phy-ed equipment (due to the lack of available storage), causing safety concerns.
- Gymnastics participants use powder, which poses a potential safety issue if it spreads to floors where running sports and phy-ed take place. Slipping on powder can cause potential knee and ankle injuries.
- Current teams and athletes are turned away for practice space during certain times of the year due to district space constraints.
- New sports, like boys and girls lacrosse, rely and pay for space outside of Arrowhead for practice and tryouts because no district space is available.
- All gym space at Arrowhead is booked solid Monday through Thursday from as early as 6:00 am to 9:30 pm. On Fridays, most gyms are booked until 7:00 pm with game gyms on game nights booked until 9:30 pm. Most Saturdays during the school year, the gym is booked until 2:00 pm, which is the closing of the day.

**g.) Logistics, People and Parking:** Vehicular and pedestrian flow in and around the Arrowhead campus concerns FCT members, as does the safety of students, staff, and the community on roadways, in parking lots, and on crosswalks. Currently the campus area experiences a high level of congestion. As district enrollment increases, it will certainly exacerbate current traffic levels and safety issues.

The FCT identified the following concerns relative to campus logistics:

- Traffic becomes extremely congested and long backups are common on roads surrounding the campus in the mornings and afternoons.
- Bus ridership is low, especially because buses travel early to minimize congestion at the start of school and many students are of driving age.
- Pedestrian walkways between buildings are either inconveniently located or unavailable. Students walk through parking lots and on roadways (especially near the tennis courts) to move between buildings, posing a safety hazard.
- No pedestrian walkway exists from the teacher and district parking areas of South Campus to the buildings, posing a safety issue.

- Parking areas experience high utilization. Logistical services (service vehicles, delivery trucks, etc.) also share parking areas.
- Storm water runoff and lack of grading poses drainage problems in some parking lots.
- Accumulated snow impacts where pedestrians walk in winter months, especially on the east side of the tennis courts.
- Land acquired from the Vilter farm could help address parking needs or athletic field relocation, but there would be a safety issue with students crossing County Highway K.

Craig Jefson indicated that roadway congestion might benefit from a “Campus Drive” bypass linking to County Highway K. The school and municipalities have initially explored this idea, but no decisions have been made to proceed.

- h) Community Projects:** The Arrowhead UHS district spans parts of many municipalities: the Towns of Delafield, Lisbon, Merton, Oconomowoc; the Villages of Chenequa, Hartland, Merton, Nashotah, and Sussex; and the Cities of Delafield and Pewaukee. A recurrent theme among FCT members was a desire for the school district to work in tandem with the surrounding communities. Specifically, the FCT discussed the Village of Hartland’s feasibility study for a new community center. At this time, the village has not reached any decision about adding facilities. FCT members ask that the district and village work together to determine whether there is any synergy in these efforts to avoid unnecessary duplication.
- i) District Financial Picture:** The FCT received financial information from Mr. Steve Kopecky, the school district’s Business Manager (see Appendix I). Mr. Kopecky presented a breakdown of revenues and expenses for the 2010-11 operating budget of \$24.7M. The FCT learned that the 2010 year-end fund balance of \$5.564M helps the district meet some short-term borrowing needs and demonstrates financial stability (resulting in a highly favorable Moody’s credit rating of AA1). Like all Wisconsin school districts, Arrowhead operates under revenue limits and the only way to exceed the revenue limit is through a referendum.
- j) Debt Financing:** Mike Clark of Robert W. Baird & Co. spoke to the FCT about the district’s debt position and potential tax impacts of a referendum. The district's high Moody's credit rating means that the district can borrow at lower interest rates. Currently the district has relatively little outstanding debt (~\$14M as of Dec. 31, 2011) and therefore has a great deal of debt capacity. The FCT learned that a referendum of \$25M, for example, would have a tax levy impact of \$0.37 per \$1000 (or \$74 annually on a \$200K home). Appendix J includes Mr. Clark’s presentation.

## VI. Recommendation Considerations

The FCT analyzed and discussed the facility needs of Arrowhead Union High School during several meetings to form its recommendations. Members had thoughtful conversations regarding the impact of these recommendations based on timing, the tax environment, the fiscal state of Wisconsin, the state budget, the Arrowhead UHS budget, and recent events. Therefore, the FCT asks the Board of Education to take into account these considerations:

- a) **Tax and Fiscal Environment:** One of the important considerations that must be analyzed in all public expenditure decisions is the tax impact. It is expected that the school board will understand that along with the “needs-based” capital recommendations outlined in this document, it is also a principled and valid decision to choose to not pursue these recommendations at this time.

Almost any construction recommendation will require a tax referendum to fund. In the current financial/political environment, it is extremely difficult to understand what the near and long term tax environment will be – the FCT would like the Board of Education to take that into consideration when making decisions based on these findings.

- b) **Facility Needs, Independent of Timing:** It is the FCT’s opinion that given the competitive nature for schools within the state, inaction with regard to these recommendations will challenge the future success of Arrowhead Union High School.

The FCT believes that the Board of Education must take action on the submitted recommendations. A decision to disregard these recommendations will impact the viability and effectiveness of related programs, which the FCT, school administration, and the community hold in high regard.

- c) **Enrollment Projections:** The FCT’s review of the enrollment projections did not result in a definitive understanding of future enrollment. All projections point to enrollment increasing over the next several years. Regardless of projected or actual enrollment numbers, the needs the FCT identified must be addressed even if enrollment does not significantly increase.

Knowing the Board of Education must take all outside factors into consideration during their assessment, the FCT presents the following five recommendations: Educational Fine Arts, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Field House, Aquatic Center, and Campus Logistics.

## VII. FCT Recommendations

The five recommendations below are general in nature. Appendix A contains supporting details and background related to these recommendations. Appendix B gives detailed voting results prioritizing these recommendations.

**Ranking details:** The FCT had 23 voting members; with 22 ballots cast (one ballot was not returned). Each voting member ranked the recommendations on a scale of 5 (highest priority) to 1 (lowest priority), with the option of ranking any or all items with a 0 (or “abstain”). An “abstain” vote indicates a member could not endorse that specific recommendation. Rankings were determined by the aggregated values divided by the number of non-abstaining votes. Appendix B gives detailed results

- 1. Educational Fine Arts Recommendation:** Arrowhead UHS needs to accommodate its current and growing educational programs by adding fine arts classroom and performance spaces. A modern, fully functional theater that can accommodate a greater number of people is needed, along with classroom, rehearsal, and storage spaces for all fine arts programs. **Ranking: 1** (average rank = 3.53, 3 abstain votes)
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