

FCCPS SCHOOL BOARD FACILITIES PLAN -- *Room to Grow*

Editor's Note: Document is for discussion purposes only. All activities need a deadline, timeline and sequence.

Name of Initiative: The Falls Church City Public School Board is excited to unveil “**Room to Grow**” – a community engagement initiative to select, design, finance and build a school in Falls Church City, Virginia. Every student needs room to grow, learn, achieve and thrive. Our schools are attracting students from around the Washington, DC, area and world. Our growing student population needs space to learn, and our taxpayers need a responsible, sustainable long-term plan to make critical infrastructure investments. Join us! We want to hear from you. Together, let's work to ensure every student has **Room to Grow**!

(Logo of a little seed, sprouting a new school house).

Core Values of School Board's Work:

- The School Board believes a new school facility must be built to accommodate growing student capacity.
- The School Board believes a new school facility will be based on “best practices” in education, student development and an eye for the future of student learning.
- The School Board believes a new school facility is a community asset and must be accessible, useful and open to the community.
- The School Board believes in fiscal responsibility, transparency, and studying all reasonable options to finance a school that maximize taxpayer investment.
- The School Board believes school facilities are the heart of any community and community members must be central to any decision.

Immediate School Board Actions – Due by June 30

1. Meet with City Officials to determine viability of site acquisition.
2. Finalize grade alignments.
3. Create a committee, establish norms, structure, duties, timeline and process to select members.
4. Establish a timeline to review and finalize the Master Plan.
 - a. Agree on length of master plan
5. Solicit three to four parents to serve on the Long Range Financial Working Group.
6. Ask Council to officially amend Long Range Financial Working Group to include two “school” seats.
 - a. Ask Council to promulgate official duties and scope of work for the Long Term Financial Advisory Work Group to help assist the schools with capital needs.
7. Meet with Council and request that the Long Range Financial Working Group present to the School Board the long-term debt obligations, financial policies and overall financial structures that are in place.
 - a. What is the debt level capacity for 5, 10 and 15 years out?

FCCPS SCHOOL BOARD FACILITIES PLAN -- *Room to Grow*

Vision of Community Engagement

Create and Appoint: School Board Facilities Advisory Work Group – A committee composed of community members, faculty, parents, members of City Council, Planning Commission, Long Range Financial Working Group, Education Foundation and a minimum of two members of the School Board will be appointed. Governing members shall be the School Board Chairman, Committee Chairman, Mayor, City Council member, with the support of staff, including the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, and the City Manager. A member of the School Board will Chair this committee. All staff are ex-officio and have no voting rights. Subcommittee will be no greater than 7 people. The School Board will solicit applications from the public to serve on the Committee, will interview candidates and will appoint members for two year terms. All voting members must reside in the City of Falls Church. Membership may include outside experts, but such experts will serve in an advisory capacity and will have no voting privileges. The process of selecting members will be open and transparent to the public.

The School Board Facilities Advisory Work Group will provide advice and community input to the School Board. All decisions will remain the final authority of the School Board, and cognizant fiscal agents, including City Council and the Planning Commission. The School Board Facilities Advisory Committee will make reports to the School Board, the School Board will act on the recommendations by a specified date, including amending, deferring for action, referring for further study, accepting or rejecting. The School Board will present the final actions to the cognizant fiscal agents.

- **Subcommittee on Community Engagement** -- To develop and implement plan to engage community members and communicate plans of the facility committee.
- **Subcommittee on Finance** – To assist the School Board in arranging the financial package, including new partnerships, creative financing, BABs, ARRA, and bonding, to finance the new school. Membership would include a member of the Long Range Financial Working Group and Planning Commission.
- **Subcommittee on Partnerships** –To dive-deep and explore any prospective partnerships that might assist the school board in this endeavor. Reports from this subcommittee would inform the Finance Committee.
- **Subcommittee on Site Selection and Acquisition** – To evaluate land options, including reviewing sites to acquire, sell, swap, and make arrangements to take action on property identified by the School Board for the final site. Membership would include a member of the Long Range Financial Working Group and Planning Commission.
- **Subcommittee on Design and Build** – To help the School Board engage the community on the design and build of the school.

All activities must include a School Board authorized motion on deadline, purpose, scope of work, and expectations for final report and recommendations. All meetings will be public, notes will be taken, and made publicly available (with the exception of any matters covered by closed meeting law in Virginia). The expectations and procedures for School Board participation in subcommittees will also be established by the School Board. The School Board will establish the site needs, building design and specification.

FCCPS SCHOOL BOARD FACILITIES PLAN -- *Room to Grow*

Preliminary Intermediate and Long-Term School Board Action Items (Parking Lot)

1. Appoint members to the taskforce in the fall, following back-to-school nights.
2. Once benchmarks – e.g. demographics, floor space, grade configuration – have been established, memorialize information in a document, have the School Board vote to approve the document, and distribute document to School Board Facilities Advisory Work Group.
3. In the fall of 2010, hold a work session briefing for City Council and School Board members on FCCPS School Board Facilities Plan, capacity needs, and process for engagement.
4. Brief City Council, Planning Commission, Long Range Financial Working Group, on FCCPS School Facilities Plan /Organization. Ask for public comment, and do follow-up briefing on final action of School Board.
5. Develop short-term plan to communicate FCCPS School Facilities Plan /Organization, to solicit input, and to ask for participation. Much broader public outreach is to be conducted by the Subcommittee on Community Engagement.
6. Other TBD

Examples of Work to be done by Subcommittee – the School Board will need to agree on duties, tasks, and timelines for the Subcommittees (as provided by Mr. Sharpe).

Sites to Acquire

Review the sites listed in the PSA Dewberry evaluation chart developed last June. This has good criteria, but several errors as to specific sites. Further, let's review the list developed in preparation for the last school building project.

Analyze properties in and within a half mile of the city limits for tax yield and age of structures. Those that combine the lowest tax yield and oldest structures should be explored further for redevelopment potential, including use as a school.

Engage a “knowledgeable neutral” who can provide advice on potential County and neighborhood attitudes toward the changes to prospective sites that a school-related project would involve. This person may also suggest some sites not identified by the other steps above.

Sites to Sell/Swap

This should cover all city, school, water system and EDA properties. A list and memo regarding city properties was developed last November and assignments were made (see the memo) to provide added analysis by March 1, 2010 on some of these, including the Child Development Center on Cherry Street.

The PSA Dewberry study of June 2009 has some analysis of existing school properties, but has errors, including too little acreage assigned to GM.

Once the list is prioritized, local real estate pros should be asked in confidence to provide estimated value and comments on properties at top of the list.

FCCPS SCHOOL BOARD FACILITIES PLAN -- *Room to Grow*

Prospective Partners

These should include the City, Fairfax and Arlington Counties, UVA and Va Tech, NoVA CC, and WMATA. Dewberry or another contractor might be asked to look into recent expressions of interest by developers (or the aforementioned entities) in properties in or within 10 miles of the city. Among the sources for this information would be records of city and county planning and economic development bodies.

In addition to the potential development of specific sites, we should have more general discussions with these partners regarding cooperation in education and economic development. With the Counties, the discussion should include potential boundary adjustments that could streamline (and thereby save money) on such services as trash and snow removal and school bus transport.

Sources and Uses of Funds

This should include a review of bonds currently outstanding and possible options for restructuring existing debt. Scenarios over several time periods should be developed (5 years, 10 years, 20 years) using various mixes of bonds, including 20-, 25-, and 30-year bonds and bonds that are level payment as well as front loaded and back loaded.

Several examples of the use of leasing and private public arrangements should be reviewed. Information on these are likely to be available at no cost through our NSBA National Affiliate membership and through knowledgeable citizen volunteers.

Although not immediately needed, the exploration in this area should reach out to the Falls Church Education Foundation to raise funds for substantial portions of facilities.