

Carlisle Public Schools

Educational Plan Overview



**Marie H. Doyle
Superintendent
Carlisle Public Schools
August 2008**

Carlisle Public Schools

Educational Plan Overview

August 2008

Table of Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. Vision, Mission, Core Values
- III. Educational Goals
- IV. Space Requirements
- V. Critical Assumptions
- VI. Educational Drivers
- VII. Enrollment Targets
- VIII. Summary

I. Introduction

The School Building Committee (SBC), appointed by the Board of Selectmen, has carefully studied the needs of Carlisle Public Schools for the past several years. Recently, we received approval from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to pursue reimbursement on our building project should we meet the criteria set by their board. The SBC continues to work diligently on the school building plan as we move into the final planning stages to bring forth a proposal to the Town. We are grateful to the volunteers who serve selflessly on the School Building Committee to develop a plan to renovate the facility in order to meet the needs of our students, staff and community.

Carlisle Public Schools and the Carlisle community are committed to providing a quality education for our students in adequate learning spaces. Our last building project, the addition of the Grant Building, was completed in 1997. Since then, education has changed dramatically due to federal and state laws. These changes have resulted in a need for more educational space. Additionally, schools need to prepare students to work in a global economy and community, resulting in programmatic space needs that address science and technology education.

II. Vision, Mission, Core Values

The vision of the Carlisle Public Schools is to inspire intellectual and ethical excellence so our students are prepared to participate with integrity in a global community.

The mission of the Carlisle Public Schools is to provide a collaborative and caring community in which each student is known, understood, and valued so that students can learn to their fullest potential in a safe, inclusive environment with high expectations and clear standards for all.

Our core values are:

Academic Excellence

Creativity

Respect

Responsibility

A fuller expression of these values would include . . .

We always look beyond what we now know.

We constantly work to know more.

We are respectful toward all in our community.

We use what we know to help others.

We take responsibility for ourselves and for others.

III. Educational Goals

The district develops goals, reviewed annually, as the guiding principles for all decisions made by the School Committee, administrative team and staff. Our district goals include current educational goals as well as facility needs. They are:

Goal 1: Maximize Student Learning

Goal 2: Build a Community of Respect in a Safe and Healthy Learning Environment

Goal 3: Assess the Effectiveness of the Curriculum

Goal 4: Create a Comprehensive Strategic Plan

Goal 5: Integrate Technology

Goal 6: Meet the Space Needs and Managing the Resources of the Carlisle Public Schools

IV. Space Requirements

A. Spalding

The Spalding Building needs to be replaced and educational space deficiencies in Robbins, Wilkins, Corey and Grant Buildings need to be addressed. Spalding currently houses: 9 classrooms, the superintendent and business office, special education rooms, the teachers' lunchroom and storage areas.

B. Program Deficiencies

Program deficiencies exist in several areas. First, some classrooms are smaller than current state standards. Second, the present science labs are outdated and too small. Third, our student services are housed in overcrowded spaces, and we have been cited by the Department of Education for not providing adequate space for special education, English Language Learners (ELL) and support programs. Finally, music classes do not have classrooms appropriate for our program, so dedicated space, that meets their programmatic needs and is compliant with state codes, is needed.

V. Critical Assumptions

The Carlisle School Building Committee has approved these critical assumptions as we move forward in planning our new facilities. The critical assumptions are:

- A. Replace the Spalding and build on the existing campus
- B. Assume enrollment of 700 students
- C. Address program deficiencies and non-compliant space issues as mandated by the Department of Education
- D. Address current and future educational needs in the primary school, fine arts, science and technology, student support and ELL
- E. Number of current core classrooms (44) are sufficient; need to increase smaller learning spaces
- F. Assume core teachers will have their own classrooms while specialists may share class space
- G. Include renovations that are timely and have cost benefit from 40% reimbursement / energy savings
- H. Advocate for an energy efficient building
- I. Consider minimizing total life cycle costs during project design
- J. Be aware of cost to taxpayers

VI. Educational Drivers

A. Primary School Needs

One educational goal is to locate the pre-school through grade 2 in the same area of a building for educational purposes. This would enhance the curriculum, as teachers would be able to collaborate on the curriculum as well as students' progress in the primary grades. In addition, this would help teachers remain connected with students over the formative primary years.

Another priority is to have a secured entrance for the school. All visitors will enter through one main door where a secretary can see guests arriving. Adults will check in, and it will be known who is on campus and whether they have completed a CORI, assuring us that only trustworthy adults are near our children.

A third goal is to provide an inter-connected campus. Our youngest students will no longer need to take on and off coats, boots and mittens when traveling to music, art, physical education, lunch or the nurse. This means students will spend more time on learning in a safer, more secure school.

Also, our goal is to locate the elementary principal's office near the main entrance of the pre-K through 2 areas. Again, this keeps students safer as the principal can monitor who is in the building as well as be

immediately available to assist the youngest children on our campus.

B. Fine Arts

We have three music teachers that instruct all of our students in the Carlisle Public Schools. Students in the elementary school participate in weekly music classes while middle school students participate in band and choir. We anticipate both band and choir to have approximate class sizes of 85.

Currently our elementary music teacher uses the small ensemble practice room as a classroom. While the MSBA suggests a classroom size of 1000 square feet, our classroom is only 390 square feet - less than half the size necessary. Band students practice on stage; this is in violation of the fire code to have so many students on stage as there is no appropriate egress off stage and out of the auditorium should an emergency occur. In addition, our choir uses the back of the auditorium, and it is not handicap accessible. In addition, the band and choir classes miss one out of every four classes as they are displaced when the auditorium is used for other purposes. As done in most schools, we recommend providing dedicated instructional spaces for music, band and choir.

C. Science and Technology

A critical shortage of STEM (**S**cience, **T**echnology, **E**ngineering and **M**ath) employees is predicted in the next ten years. This shortage is due to three key factors:

1. Fewer American students are choosing to enter these careers
2. Fewer foreign students are entering STEM due to reduced visas and better economies in their homelands
3. More retirements are coming from current employees in the STEM fields

This national movement, called STEM, encourages schools to develop curriculum that raise students' awareness and promotes more students' interest in these fields. The Science and Technology Frameworks (Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks 2006) state that schools need to: "Provide for in-depth investigations of major scientific, technological and engineering concepts," and the new building needs to address the future educational goals in developing solid STEM programs. The Carlisle Middle School also needs to provide improved science and technology labs to meet the requirements outlined by the State as well as to provide a STEM pipeline for tomorrow's workforce.

Technology has become an integral part of education, and students need to have the skill set required for their future success. As more teachers incorporate technology into the curriculum, networking needs to be expanded for campus access. The head end room needs to be expanded and all of the buildings wired so that teachers and students may have internet across the campus.

D. Student Support

Federal and state law mandates that all districts provide a rigorous, standards-based education for all students. The Massachusetts State Frameworks and Carlisle's Benchmarks outline what students are expected to know and do at each grade level annually. Educational Reform requires that all students perform to high standards and meet the learning criteria set by the state and local community. The State monitors the achievement of students through the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), and they increase targeted learning goals for every community annually. In order to help all children pass the MCAS, our district provides support to all students who need assistance in learning through the following programs: Title I assistance, literacy support, math support, special education, 504 plans and an ELL program.

Inclusion is a special education model to keep special needs students in their neighborhood schools so that all students are included in regular education activities whenever possible. Since our last building project,

more students with disabilities are housed in our school where they participate in regular classes and receive support from special educators. This has also increased our need for classroom space .

In the fall of 2007, the Department of Education (DOE) conducted an audit called the *Coordinated Program Review (CPR)*. The DOE cited Carlisle for teaching children in overcrowded and inappropriate spaces, and they mandated that we address these space needs. The Department of Education was apprised that the School Building Committee is working in conjunction with the MSBA to address these concerns; thus, these space shortages must be addressed in this building project.

E. English Language Learners

ELL (English Language Learners) is a program for students whose primary language is not English. This program, mandated by the state and federal government, requires Carlisle to provide an ELL teacher and space for students to learn English as well as receive support. The law clearly states that this space needs to be separate from special education as they are different programs.

VII. Enrollment Targets

Enrollment projections are gathered from John Ballantine Associates, New England School Development Council (NESDEC) and the MSBA. All three providers discuss Carlisle's unique characteristics and agree upon the projections for future enrollments. For the next ten years, it is recommended that facility planning meets the needs of 600-700 students.

VIII. Summary

Our educational goals drive our facility needs at Carlisle Public Schools. Please join us at upcoming meetings so that we may share more detailed information about our building plans and answer your questions as we move forward on the school building project. By working closely with all constituents in Carlisle, we hope to receive community support for facility renovations that result in adequate learning spaces for our students and teachers at Carlisle Public Schools. We remain grateful to the Carlisle community for their continuous support of our school system.