

BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 64

COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE:
21ST CENTURY/FUTURE READY LEARNING CLASSROOMS

Monday, October 24, 2016
6:45 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Lincoln Middle School – Gym
200 South Lincoln Avenue
Park Ridge, IL 60068

AGENDA

APPENDIX

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Tour of 21st Century/Future Ready Learning Classrooms
3. The Power of Place: Designing Learning Environments for Future Ready Learning 1
4. Public Comments
5. Adjournment

To: Board of Education
Dr. Laurie Heinz, Superintendent

From: Mary Jane Warden, Director of Innovation & Instructional Technology

Date: October 24, 2016

Re: Committee of the Whole – The Power of Place: Designing Classroom
Environments for Future-Ready Learning

Tour of 21st Century/Future Ready Learning Classrooms

The Board and community will be invited at the start of the meeting to tour two spaces at Lincoln Middle School -- Room 211 and the DEN (Discover Empower Network Studio). Joining us on the tour will be Lincoln Staff members Megan Preis (Instructional Technology Coach), Melissa Johnson (6th grade teacher), Kara Dabe (6th grade teacher), and Mike Taglia (7th/8th grade ELA teacher).

Background

As the first year of the District's 1:1 learning initiative came to a close in spring 2015, it became apparent that the current state of the District's classroom furniture and environment were not perfectly aligned with modern educational philosophy and our 2020 Vision Strategic Plan goals for instruction, where collaboration and inquiry-based learning are central to what our students do and how they learn. As a part of our 2020 Vision Strategic Plan, District 64 envisions a change for students in their learning styles and in their learning environments. Strategic Objective Five states that, "Student learning is enhanced by the school environment in which they learn. The capacity and flexibility of facilities to support learning creates opportunities for teachers to deliver differentiated, innovative curriculum for students."

The challenge quickly became how to respect the richness of the District's architectural history with some buildings dating to 1928, while creating classrooms that ignite learning and innovation in the modern age. The science of classroom design, as seen [HERE](#), demonstrates how environment is as important as the instructor and curriculum. Simply put, our classrooms – [the "Third Teacher"](#) – needed to catch up to our expectations for how students learn and teachers teach in the 21st century. The District recognizes that there is "Power of Place" in the way students learn.

Pilot Programs

To address this challenge, two different pilot programs are currently underway at Lincoln Middle School as seen on the tour. The District is fortunate to have received grant funding to implement both of these environments:

- Room 211 - Ms. Johnson and Ms. Dabe, later joined by Ms. Preis (Instructional Technology Coach), began to explore different paradigms of instructional practice and classroom management. This team began actively researching various "traffic patterns," furniture types, and room arrangements and how these new methods could propel the learning process and overcome some of the limitations and obstacles caused by the current room layout and equipment. The District 64 Elementary Learning Foundation (ELF) awarded a \$15,440 grant to create a classroom characterized by flexibility, mobility and usability, building a space that allows and encourages students to collaborate, communicate and engage in critical thinking. As an "Active Learning

Space,” the layout and type of furniture would allow for multiple learning configurations and would accommodate the multitude of ways our students learn. The active learning space would allow students to choose what type of learning space works best for them.

- In a parallel process, Mr. Taglia was also coming to these same realizations in the broadcasting and computer lab area of Lincoln’s lower level. Mr. Taglia saw an opportunity to transform an underused space into an area bustling with students engaged, productive, exploring, and learning. He too began this study of the “Third Teacher” and wanted the learning space to be able to fit any situation and to promote the practice of digital communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. As previously reported to the Board, Bretford donated \$55,000 worth of furniture to this lower level classroom space to help us realize this vision.

In addition to these two areas at Lincoln, Washington School this year benefitted from an ELF grant of \$10,424 to provide new seating options for second grade classrooms.

Next Steps

As the Master Facilities Plan outlines, the most important actions of District 64 to create optimal learning environments are to manage resources efficiently and effectively to enhance teaching and learning; provide attractive, safe, secure, and healthy spaces in which students can engage in active and meaningful ways; create flexible spaces that foster the 4 C's among students and staff; and create engaging, technology-rich learning environments, among other actions.

To accomplish these goals, we must be creative about the way space is used, and rethink how to make space more functional, more collaborative and flexible. Building on these three pilots, the District has begun developing a library of furniture/equipment options that could be used in the future yet remain within the District’s sustainable budget target. In conjunction, administration is working to standardize a design process and create a professional development course for teachers interested in transitioning their classroom space. Working within this baseline design and suite of furniture options, the goal would be to give students and teachers voice to shape their learning environment.

District 64 has been fortunate to receive kickstart funds from ELF and Bretford to transform the ingenuity of dedicated educators into two prototype classroom environments driven by teaching and learning best practices. We look forward to sharing these future-ready learning environments with the Board and community at the Committee-of-the-Whole on Monday, October 24 at Lincoln Middle School.