

## CHOICES FOR THE FUTURE

### Design Down

- A planning process involving a representative group of staff, students and citizens
- Deals with “big questions” at the beginning such as societal issues, educational trends and moves to specifics of the educational programming and facility needs

The work of the Design Down Committee begins with the focus on what our community wants to provide in programs, experiences and services for high school students served by the WDMCSD. This group of 85 parents, students, staff and community members is meeting over the next several months, under the direction of RDG Education and nationally recognized consultant Bruce Jilk. The committee will also host informational meetings and forums, provide opportunities for feedback through surveys and small group discussions and invite district residents to comment on planning in progress.

The Design Down process encourages participants to:

- Observe, evaluate and understand current high school learning methods and constraints caused by existing design.
- Identify and investigate emerging trends being implemented elsewhere in the country.
- Critique existing high school facilities in the West Des Moines Community School District.
- Incorporate the information set forth in the “Valley High School 21<sup>st</sup> Century High School” into optional physical design concepts/solutions.

The work of the Design Down committee concludes with a report that synthesizes committee input and presents options for accommodating the learning needs of high school students served by WDMCSD. These options will be reviewed by the Superintendency who will make a recommendation to the Board of Education for further action.

You can get involved in the community conversations on high school education! Plan to attend the following:

### Design Down Progress Reports (including opportunities for feedback)

Wednesday, March 13	7 p.m.	Valley Southwoods Forum
Wednesday, May 1	7 p.m.	Valley Southwoods Forum

### Informational Workshops

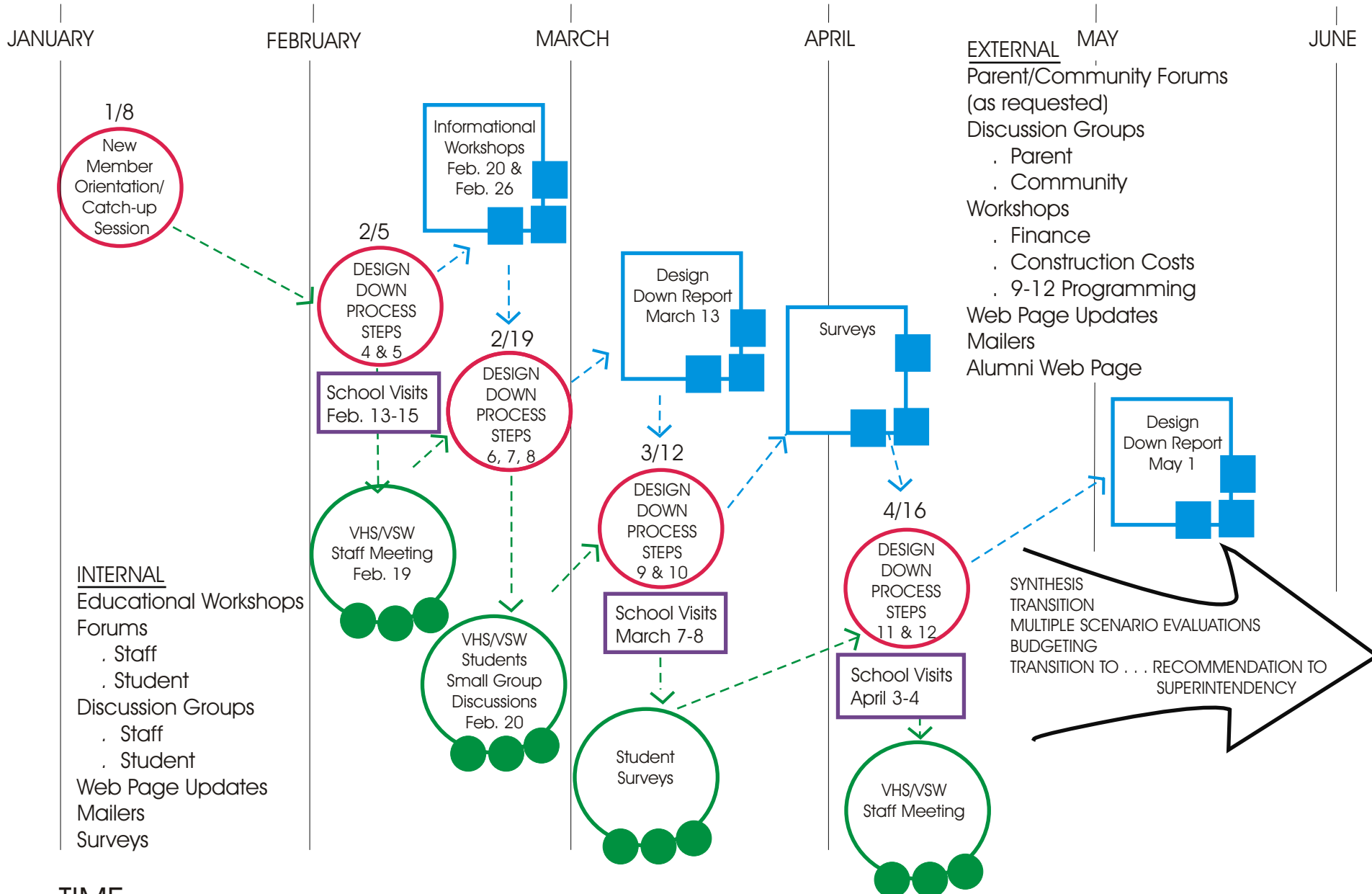
#### School finance, facility planning and cost estimating, current high school programming, request for feedback (each of the two sessions listed below will have the same agenda)

Wednesday, February 20	7 p.m.	Valley Southwoods Forum
Tuesday, February 26	7 p.m.	Valley Southwoods Forum

**Additional** meetings are scheduled with staff at Valley and Valley Southwoods. Small group discussions will be held with students at Valley and Valley Southwoods. Meetings will be scheduled with the athletic, band, orchestra and vocal booster groups and the Valley/Valley Southwoods Parent Teacher Organization. Surveys will be distributed to high school students and district residents.

Questions? Would you like to schedule a meeting at your school? Please contact Kay Rosene at [rosenek@wdm.k12.ia.us](mailto:rosenek@wdm.k12.ia.us) or call 226-2714.

# VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM DESIGN DOWN PROCESS EXTENSION OPTION



TIME



**West Des Moines Community School District**  
**21<sup>st</sup> Century Valley High School Planning Process**  
**RDG Education Number 21249.00**  
**21 December 2001**  
**29 January 2002 (revised)**

## **“Design Down” Task Force Committee Detail**

### **Overview**

RDG Education, with nationally recognized consultant Bruce Jilk, AIA has been commissioned by the WDMCSD to lead a Task Force of teachers, parents, students and community representatives in determining the needs and physical attributes of a 21<sup>st</sup> century High School for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century West Des Moines Community School District. This work, branded by Bruce Jilk as the “Design Down Process” results in a set of architectural instructions that will be used when the team begins design of improvements/additions/remodeling work with the goal of improving the environment that supports teaching and learning for the Valley High School community.

Attached is a copy of the proposal for this work.

### **Task Force Committee Definition**

#### **Who?**

Vicky Poole, Principal of VHS, was responsible for assembling representatives from the community for task force participation. Members were selected for their area of knowledge, experience in the district and interest. The list includes staff, administrators, district curriculum superintendents, students and community members with children both in, coming up soon or graduate experience from VHS. In some cases members represent more than one category. Political party was not considered. An effort was made to include representation from all municipal areas that feed students into the WDMCSD.

Members were considered for their perceived ability to engage in open, fair and positive dialogue. It was assumed that each member would have the ability to speak their opinions openly but always with respect for the opinions of others. Members were perceived to be respected in the community for their honesty and their dedication to making positive improvements to the learning environment that is defined by WDMCSD.

### **Responsibility of Task Force Committee Members?**

1. **Participate.** The Design Down process works best when continuity of the learning experience is achieved. Drifting in and out of the process is not encouraged. Members must declare their intent of ability to attend a majority of meetings for the process to be successful.
2. **Share.** Members must be open, honest and able to contribute in a respectful manner. Each member is encouraged to share the task force committee’s work with other community members who are not able to participate at this level of contribution.

3. **Gather.** As well, each member must have the ability and dedication to extend their body of knowledge and understanding. Members must bring input from their circles of influence outside this committee.
4. **Understand “Consensus”.** Members need to have the ability to understand that consensus doesn’t mean that all opinions are included in the final outcome. Rather, all opinions have been considered as decisions are made so that everyone understands how and why decisions were made.

### **Final Recommendation Responsibility?**

RDG Education with Bruce Jilk, AIA will be responsible for collecting, synthesizing and reporting the final Task Force Committee recommendations to the Superintendent and the WDMCSD Board of Education. **It should be clear that the consultants believe strongly that the final recommendation for this project will reflect the consensus of the Task Force Committee.**

The Task Force Committee will be responsible for assisting with informal, community wide communication of the recommendation to the community.

### **Additional Observations**

This is a public committee focused on a very important public project. The process will likely involve many questions, debate, dialogue and scrutiny from many community perspectives.

Task Force Committee members are asked to understand their role as critical members who are absolutely vital to a participatory process designed to **“listen first and conclude later”**.

## **Design Down Committee Process Summary**

The work of the Design Down committee begins with the focus on what the West Des Moines community wants to do for high school students served by the WDMCSD.

Review of Relevant Objectives:

- Observe, evaluate and understand current high school learning methods and constraints caused by existing design.
- Identify and investigate emerging trends being implemented elsewhere in the country.
- Critique of existing West Des Moines High School facilities.
- Incorporate the information set forth in the “Valley High School 21<sup>st</sup> Century High School” into optional physical design concepts/solutions.

The work of the Design Down committee concludes with a report that synthesizes committee input and presents optional solutions for accommodating the learning needs of high school students served by WDMCSD. The optional solutions will be reviewed by the Superintendency who will make their recommendations to the Board of Education for further action.