

**Valley High School Program Committee
Minutes – October 7, 2003**

Present: Whitney Beaver, Fred Bell, Anjana Chandran, Jackie Crawford, Jean Doerge, Mandy Dorff, Jamie Ehlert, Allison Hansen, Ruth Henderson, Taylor Johnson, Randy Mead, Nick Nelsen, Vicky Poole, Rob Schebel, Sherry Snider, Mary Whitaker, Donna Wilkin

Support Members: Jeff Blosser (RDG), Dave Blum, , Liz Celania-Fagen, Gordon Dahlby, Eliz Erbes (RDG), Phil Hodgin (RDG), Kim Jordan, Susie Meade, Jody Ratigan, Kay Rosene, Phyllis Staplin

Donna Wilkin welcomed all to the meeting. Committee members participated in a check-in exercise. The group then conducted a “world café” session to provide input on the results of investigations by each committee member.

Feedback from each table is summarized below. (The full transcription may be found at the end of the meeting minutes.)

 Create space

 teachers from different disciplines need time to talk informally
 place teacher workroom and lounge adjacent for informal “natural
 blends/conversations

 Commons area – house student activities office

 “Fat C” – group teachers that want to work together

 provide flexible spaces in some rooms

 More dispersed media center materials

 Need space and time for collaboration – common work and conversation areas

 More open hallways and stairways

 All students need a locker; space to store projects

 Designate rooms by discipline and design accordingly (form follows function)

 Teachers may use multiple rooms, rather than assign a teacher/room

 Locate student commons near the media center

 Color is important

 Provide a locker/student – allow a check-in system for large items

 “Fat C” – share technology and resources

 Allow for natural connections in the curriculum

 Design a multi-level media center

 Keep math/science in the renovated area; locate social studies, language arts, foreign
 language in the three-story “tower”

 Spread cafeteria area to commons to make the dining area more appealing

 ICN – should it continue? How is it utilized at present and what are the plans for the future?

 Provide spaces where teachers can meet

 Students learn best in an environment for good discussion with teachers and among students

 Why would a student choose Valley? Teachers create an environment to help students know
 each other

 Teacher communication is important– not in favor of a department-only emphasis

 Media center could be smaller; locate resources near classrooms and study areas

Phil Hodgkin showed a video on creativity. In small groups, committee members worked with an area diagram of program spaces and cut-outs of the potential uses of the space. Each group then reported out the results of their initial efforts to put the puzzle together. This puzzle activity will continue at the next meeting.

Next meeting: Thursday, October 23 7:30 a.m. Learning Resource Center

WORLD CAFÉ discussion (full transcription)

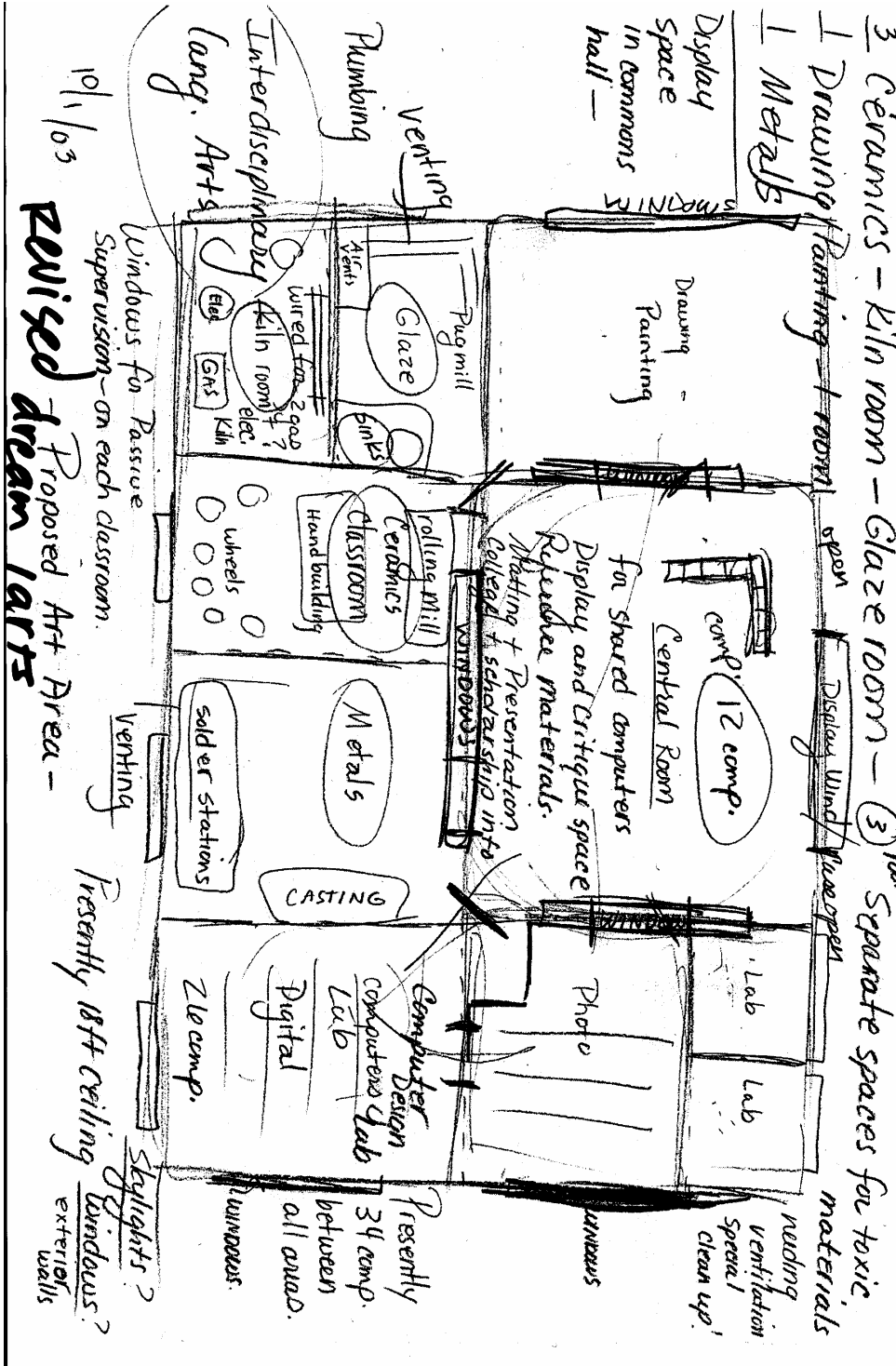
White Sheets

- Space and time need to be allocated for collaboration.
- One-way stairs to keep efficiency? Or split stairs?
- Is it possible to design central work areas for teachers to work together for ideas that are interdisciplinary? (work areas)
- We need to remember that we have interdisciplinary mandate.
- Extra time for conversation during the school day?
- What about joint space for teachers? If every teacher has a room, will the function of joint space change?
- Is it possible architecturally to have labs next to commons area with raised ceilings?
- Should the art rooms (with certain ventilation needs) be backed up to Industrial Arts area?
- Language Arts wedded with Art. Top floor due to ventilation?
- Architectural design with Arts?
- Is the porch creating room that won't be used, sacrificing classroom size.
- Hallways make the school seem unpleasant (and lunchroom)
- Locker use – trends – giant backpack. No answers to design.
- Each fat C – by department
- Not any students want interdisciplinary in 1 fat C
- Like Special Ed mixed throughout building
- Too few opportunities for true interdisciplinary
- Inflexible – VSW
- Go with fat C as long as students go from one to another C.
- We do need lockers (Whitney Beaver)
- Validated – don't trap students in interdisciplinary areas.
- A disturbed view from teacher – we need larger classrooms.
- Does each fat C need to have the central area? Some would prefer using this space to increase class size.
- Lighted, larger hallways
- Only schools do not have multiple interdisciplinary work.
- Connection mandate: provide for some interdisciplinary opportunity!
- Rooms designated according to class (geometry).
- Geometry by western civilization by Fundies/Speech Comp. or Calculus based physics (2 periods)
- Writing labs
- Lockers are needed by they must be larger and centrally located.

- Kids need time and space to get help from teachers.
- Everyone is so negative about the physical set of Southwoods. Maybe we should be redesigning it instead of Valley HS?
- Education is the only place where people function in such a content specific manner. All other areas are far more integrated.
- Have weekly “world/knowledge cafes” for interdisciplinary sharing (faculty & students)
- Sometimes an integrated approach is much stronger & deeper even if students don’t like it.
- Would it be possible to put small, secure offices in each teacher’s classroom and add one large teachers’ lounge for all and eliminate office areas?
- What about a teachers’ workroom that includes space for teachers to store/share their own books, films, etc.
- Lockers – who uses them?
- Is there a percentage of lockers needed/student??
- Trends in backpacks
- Assess utilization?
- Lockers outside?
- Students not trapped in one area
- C design be at curriculum area
- Students want to move at building and circulate
- Idea....Drama – new classroom – black box theater – move special education (??)
- Art & language arts & metals/wood & architectural drawing
- Natural not forced connection between disciplines
- Art & language on top floor – 18’ ceilings for art space
- Ventilation
- Light
- Space
- Plumbing is an issue
- Consider connection to industrial arts, ventilation
- Architectural drawing/design?
- Classrooms by course offering: i.e. geometry, calculus, speech, debate, U.S. history, etc.
- Crowding/nonintimate learning
- Hallways
- Lunchroom

Different types of equipment specific to each area.

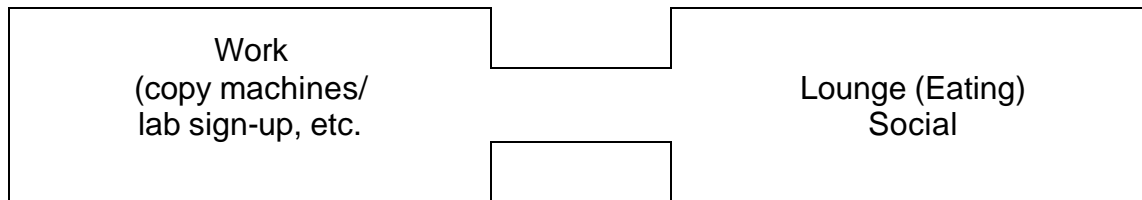
Teacher office w/ long auto w/ teacher work area -



Green Sheets

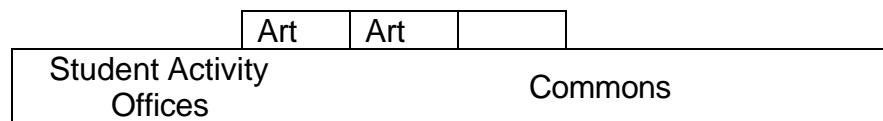
- Decentralize media center according to discipline areas
- Grouping by discipline for “resource” help
- Mentoring new teachers aided by grouping by discipline
- Agreement Decisions/Recommendation:
 - ⇒ Labs – 4 science
 - ⇒ Consumer areas – leave as is
 - ⇒ Special Ed – near entrance/family consumer sciences
- Problem with sharing room...sign up. What if all teachers wanted creative writing room at same time.

2nd floor teachers (one area)



- Display area – public interface
- 3rd floor
 - ⇒ high 18' ceiling
 - ⇒ kiln, photo/wet lab/3-D
 - ⇒ Arrangement & language arts
 - ⇒ Need freight elevator
- Finding new connections
- Common Themes
 - ⇒ Allow circulation of students
 - ⇒ Not break up subjects
 - ⇒ Link through learning “c” in departments
 - ⇒ Labs work/needed for world language, resource, art studio/drawing/architecture (? workshop)
 - ⇒ don't do it – make all fat C's unless needed
 - ⇒ Natural blending
- Grouping by discipline. Helpful to teachers (for ideas) but makes it difficult to do interdisciplinary work.
- Bring teachers together
- Dispersed media center
- Provide interdisciplinary opportunities
- Planning time
- Coordinating time
- Incentives aligned for faculty
- Students ?require one?
- Interdisciplinary studies ?really a space problem or really a time problem?
- Group by department...it's important for science people to be with other science people and to know what they are doing
- Storage

- Greenhouse on roof
- Greenhouse as part of commons
- ICN – necessity? No?
- Smaller work areas for 4-B students to work, close their classrooms
- Connections/linkages of writing/reading
- Government/history – language arts
- No one (?) wants to duplicate the Southwoods model.
- Barnes & Noble's idea to media center/commons
- Media Center more dispersed.
- Duplication of time, effort & materials difficult if science curriculum is split.
- Mentoring teachers in same discipline.
- Storage areas be incorporated? Not lose classroom space.
- Art Center/Writing ex.
- Big commons area, not several little commons
- Group departments together & departments with similar interests near each other.
- Application of subjects to life, making connections.



- Art-Drawing/Anatomy
- Units-Disease/History
- Students can work independently
- Interdisciplinary needs time for teachers to collaborate
- Language Arts/Art – writing
- Math/Tech Ed

Yellow Sheets

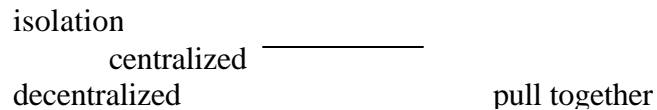
- Extended hours classes (Debate, Theater, Radio, Journalism Yearbook & Spotlight) need to be in areas (i.e. first floor) that are easily accessible & secure!
- In “C’s” put subject together.
- Writing & US History
- Creative Writing & Arts, Visual
- Not always together – put similar together
- Already in 6th grade, isolated disciplines
- We can't change so completely to interdisciplinary
- Need natural connections – not forced
- Math & social studies & music
- Testing prohibits interdisciplinary learning
- Begin with teachers that wish to think thematically
- Build more rooms they currently needed – space needs always seem to increase rather than decrease
- Teachers need time in own discipline area to share and grow professionally.

- Need much more of an experiential approach to teaching, not the traditional lecture format. Learning should be fun, challenging & exciting.
- Home like school environment – warm & inviting
- Lockers are essential but they must be bigger.
- Have daily (or weekly) 15-20 minutes conversation times for all staff (like New Zealand tea time) not a meeting – a relaxed time for conversation.
- Teacher’s lounges are only used for lunch. Provide space to eat at desk, then have one work room connected to one very nice lounge (on 2nd floor) to encourage all faculty to converse.
- Students like it when teachers interact across disciplines.
- Design each of three floors differently to meet specific needs although flexible enough for future needs (small rooms for small classes and larger classrooms for traditionally larger classes).
- Could teachers make a list of ideas/areas of ways (specific) to integrate their subject into others to encourage collaboration?
- Need space for growing population of students with special needs.
- The reading initiative has been great for encouraging innovation.
- Lecturing is actually okay if it’s like storytelling.
- Put rooms like media center, teachers lounge & workroom in the tower (maybe on 2nd floor).
- It’s very difficult for people to get from one space to another in the current building. Be sure to address in new building.
- The center of the C would be highly utilized by some departments. Others might not use so wouldn’t need.
- Experience at Southwoods has left negative feeling about interdisciplinary approach although not necessarily because of the physical set-up.
- Important to work with others with “like” fields.
- Meeting time of 15 minutes would help areas throughout the building socialize and share ideas.
- Students are leery of Southwoods & integration of classes.
- What resources (production) can teachers & students share?
 - ⇒ poster
 - ⇒ large printers
 - ⇒ video edit
 - ⇒ audio edit
 - ⇒ unique hardware
 - ⇒ copies
 - ⇒ color copiers
- Barnes and Noble and relaxed environment-student commons
- Color lockers – check airport lockers – no
- Same classes together – technology sharing resources
- Natural connections
- Put subjects together with similar subjects nearby
- Color
- Group #1 – Teachers don’t like interdisciplinary learning – needs change
- Group #2 – planning time for tests, 3 & 3 learning in each pod
- Coat check concept with coats & large bags

- Lockers needed
- Relaxed atmosphere important
- Social time for teachers to talk about what is being taught in other subjects
- Natural connections
- Is a “fat C” necessary for all areas?
- Size variation of classes
- Lockers needed by some natural connections
- Time for teachers to collaborate and discuss curriculum and student relations
- Fat C’s/classrooms according to needs of subject.
- LA—Journalism—Speech—Debate
- LA—Creative Writing—Art (high ceilings)—Digital Photo—Media Lab
- (High ceilings)—Light
- Debate—S.S.—Math
- Dedicated space for “spontaneous collaborative eruptions”
- Teacher resource & teacher lounge per floor
- Dispersed Media Center
- Commons area – relaxed/color
- Areas: yearbook, career, video, newspaper, clubs, etc.
- More relaxed adult to adult style sofa vs. desk
- Caution: vertical bottlenecks
- Lockers: all need one
- Students don’t like airport style because randomness concern: change to not find one
- Lockers: larger available
- Rental basis for projects?
- Rooms: tie discipline to a room
 - ⇒ Not teacher based
 - ⇒ Result: move cross-over discipline
 - ⇒ i.e. math: geometry, calculus, trig w/lab connection
- Tower: humanities based with 3 story media center
- Flat: science – math
- ICN: used by adult learners, not students. How feasible for future?
- Disciplines need to stay together

Gray Sheets

- Counselors aligned with departments?
- How to keep departmental teacher culture in balance in exchange for a whole VHS community
- Alignments = World Language – C for common language lab
- Question regarding “staffing” of resource type areas in porch space
- Keep disciplines together
- Change subjects grouped together (foreign language & math)
- Change common subject area (see diagram)
- Current reality: departmental culture today at VHS. How to create healthy balance for teachers as a whole?



- Rooms in “logical” order (easier to find/understand)
- More windows
- Carpet (homey, comfortable)
- Athletic wing a.c. (later project)
- Bigger hallways (better movement patterns)
- Make ramps more accessible
- Minimize disruption
- Lockers – useable
- Lockers in outside between building space?
- Color
- More restrooms/drinking fountains
- Student theme: keep it the same; it works.
- Learning styles
- Like teachers who make “connections”...not just read from textbook
- Like “connections” but...not necessarily “projects” (effect on grade concerns)
- Make rooms work like...extended learning room (flexible) – (not just desks)
- Same level as teacher...“adult like” atmosphere – couches & tables
- Staircases: how to handle volumes/crowding at passing hours & not make a mess.
- Media Center = break it up
- Media Center -- science resources = science area
- Department & all staff culture
- Teacher communication
- Learning styles
- What makes students choose other schools over Valley?
- How can we change that?
- No interdisciplinary as far as building plans
- Rules: only use white & don’t change purple
- Vision without technique is blind.
- Student pet peeve = multiple tests in one day (no teacher coordination)
- Coat check in rooms (supervisor).
- Community service hours
- Departments – keep by discipline, but how to share best practices among staff?
- Students want/need circulation, so need ? hallways & stairs. One-ways?
- Tests – how to coordinate so students don’t have multiple tests on same day. Designate days for each department to test.

Orange Sheets

- Sometime we have to address special rooms.
- ICN? “I didn’t know Valley had one now.”
- “It’s the 2nd best one in the city.”
- “How often used?”
- “Not an option to not have it.”
- “That space may not be replicated.”

- ??Future of ICN??
- Tech room – need drive up – 1st floor – larger space
- Student commons – good idea – like “Barnes & Noblish”
- Present Media Center not good.
- Media Center = sterile “Something that will open up to the Media Center.”
- We want this to last for a long time.
- Smaller spaces? Would that help? Yes.
- “Not a place when you’re going to talk with friends.”
- Need informal area for socializing and place to study.
- Media Center within the commons area.
- The Media Center “spills out” to the commons.
- Internet kiosks – social area to access Internet.
- Quality Media Center staff is key. They love books and want to share books.
- ISU library – open area for accessible computers. Study areas are in less accessible (quiet) areas.
- Learning lab at VHS = space is very important to learning. They want a comfortable place to chat. They like computer access. They don’t like desks. They prefer group work.
- Updated media.
- We prefer social email be kept out of the school. We may not be able to prevent it.
- The community may use this area as well? Will it be open to community?
- Could an Internet café operate in the commons?
- “Appropriate use” is an issue.
- Tables lead to “personal space violations” -- “I prefer desks”
- New term “bulimic learning” – spew it out for the test – do it for the grade – that’s what counts.
- Keep math/science in present labs (renovate area)
- New space – move Humanities
- Students like to move around the building. They don’t want to be confined.
- Lounges aren’t used
- Larger lounge needed
- Cafeteria in center of commons area – accessible to sporting events.
- Café could be smaller. If it were more welcoming, students would stay on campus.
- Move café into commons area, a multipurpose space.
- Lots of interactivity in the open area (work/study/eat) socialize. Presently, not very nice place.
- Black box – multipurpose space needed.
- ICN – great promise whose time has never come.
- Internet access is tied to the ICN.
- Utilized little at high school.
- Works well at college level.
- Rural districts may use it more.
- Matching schedules is hard to do.
- Tech difficulties. Could the ICN space be used for other purpose as well?
- I like the idea of Valley sharing content with other districts.
- Additional cost – Maybe other districts would pay.

- Distance learning may be more Internet.
- Keep the disciplines grouped together.
- Cafeteria – combine with commons area? Barnes & Noble style design.
- Make welcoming; use for study halls, social; not just lunch.
- Lockers necessary because gives students “own space” – something they can call their own.
- Airport style lockers – check-out at will?
- Quarter-in-slot? (refunded when key back in?) hassle to maintain?
- Lockers – airport locker idea bad.
- More centralized lockers. They want assigned lockers. Rectangular lockers better.
- How about a valet coat check? Too long to check in, check out.
- I want a locker in a space I choose.
- Existing lab spaces are valuable. New labs would be smaller.
- In Verona, WI, bottleneck design stairways weren’t convenient. Be careful.
- Need to be able to put down backpack and books in several places (cafeteria for books, coats by doors, etc.)
- Can the Media Center be 2 floors? Yes.
- Bigger lockers. Have a lottery for getting lockers. Let 10th graders go first (new to building, more classes, etc.)
- Could have cubbies for coats and backpacks as well as lockers.
- ICN is not used very much. Southwoods students didn’t use the ICN very much. More for adults.
- Media Center smaller.
- New work areas will take up some of the space.
- The way we access knowledge is decentralized electronic.
- Printed material is still valuable.
- A 3-story media center is a possibility.
- Need vending machines with healthy foods (yogurt, fruit, sandwiches, etc.). You could do this now. Some kids just eat candy and a soda for lunch to avoid the current cafeteria congestion.
- Multiple size lockers for different needs including temporary lockers for projects.
- In New Zealand, tea time in the middle of the day. Present staff can’t meet comfortably now.
- 3rd floor – better view
- 2nd floor – more central
- Need teacher work space.
- Lounges now fragmented.
- Will Media Center placement make it more useful?
- Could let students self-select locker areas especially those that aren’t as centrally located (art, music, etc.)
- Have designated days for tests, e.g. math Tuesdays, English Wednesdays.
- Windows – natural light needed
- Put math & science in the “flat” (one-story) area.
- Concern: vertical bottlenecking
- If & where? Radio & radio tower?
- If & when? status of greenhouse?
- Need bathrooms on every floor and larger bathrooms for women!