

Field Trip 8-20-08 – Elementary School Tour Notes

A team of Riverview and Machias teachers including principals plus three NAC representatives and one Heery Intl. representative toured four elementary schools.

1. Ben Franklin Elementary – Kirkland, WA

The teachers liked that the natural surroundings of the new school were preserved. They liked the courtyards a lot. There was a picnic area that was also well liked. Teachers commented that as nice as the courtyards were, there was a) not enough seating and the areas did not allow for supervision from the classroom. One classroom featured an operable door that the teachers felt was a nice option. While visiting the teaching spaces a need for a lot of storage. Overall the teachers preferred more windows and more wall space.

Comment was made that the classrooms felt tight and too compact. The overall color scheme, particular the exterior one, was regarded as too dark. The overall exterior design was viewed as too modern and teachers felt that this type of design would not fit into the rural setting of Snohomish.

The exterior covered play area was too close to the road with only a fence separating kids from cars. The extended learning areas outside were nice and well liked. The teachers felt the overall transparency within the teaching spaces. It encourages kids to move.

When visiting the gym, the teachers expressed their preference for a raised stage. Reference was made to Little Cedar's art, music, common areas and gym facilities being exactly what the teachers want in their new schools.

Overall the teachers felt that Ben Franklin was a nice facility that looked like it was established a lot longer ago than just 2 years (not in a negative way).

The team liked the layout of the main office, but did not feel that the entrance to the school

2. Lakeview Elementary School – Kirkland, WA

Due to time constraints the team only visited teaching spaces. They talked to some teachers preparing for the new school year to get feedback on their likes and dislikes of the facility.

Overall the team liked the exterior color scheme a lot. It was called nice, bright and positive. The outside covered waiting area was regarded to be a very nice feature. The team liked the nice open interior spaces. They felt that the teaching spaces felt less isolated.

When talking to teachers, the team found that the Lakeview teaching staff does not really utilize the flex spaces as much and would much rather have this space being part of their small classrooms.

The team felt that the flex spaces resembled “cafeterias” much more than a learning environment. The interior colors were well liked as well as the choice of materials. The library had large exposed wood trusses that the team loved. The team expressed the desire to have lots of natural materials and light colors incorporated into the design of their new schools. Forest View Elementary was mentioned several times as a great example of this type of design.

The team liked the entrance to this school better because it was more defined and more easily identified as the entrance. The team liked the welcoming feel of the main office; however, felt that it might be exposed to too much traffic.

3. Woodridge Elementary – Bellevue, WA

The team loved the size of the classrooms. They did not like the common spaces, art and music areas as well as the ones at Little Cedars. Added collaborative spaces would have made the teaching spaces idea. It was mentioned that flex spaces could be sacrificed in lieu of larger classrooms; however, this would not go with the educational goals as outlined in the ed specs.

They liked the layout of the restrooms. The team mentioned liking the overall color scheme best and called the building “impressive”.

4. Rosa Park Elementary – Redmond, WA

The team did not like the open wood ceiling concept, calling it “unfinished” and “looking like scaffolding”. They loved the other finishes, such as paint, wood, furniture, flooring, etc.

The classroom size was considered adequate at 875 SF. The liked the layout of classrooms in orientation to the flex spaces. They thought that the flex spaces were put together well and good use was made of the space. The concept of additional storage within flex spaces was explored.

The overall color scheme was considered too dark for the hallways and showing scuff marks easily and determined to be user unfriendly.

Again, the common/gym/art/music areas were considered o.k., but the Little Cedar areas were much preferred over what was presented at Rosa Parks.