

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Edgewood Planning Team
RE: Library Renovation and Office Relocation
DATE: April 9, 2014

Edgewood School: Limitations of Current Structure and Needs for the Future

Background Information

The current Edgewood library serves the needs of our students and staff, but with many drawbacks. The structure was built in at least two separate construction periods and has separate spaces which don't allow for a line of sight by the librarian through the area. Since it is relatively small, most of the bookcases are more than six feet high making them inaccessible to elementary students. The HVAC system is inadequate and the space is frequently under repair. The heat comes from the ceiling and since it is built on a slab, the floor is often cold. The slab has also shifted causing the floor to be uneven in many locations. A further related problem is that the drainage system for the flat roof passes under the floor. In cold winter conditions, the drain freezes under the floor, water backs up and floods the library floor. Clearly our library is the smallest of all the Scarsdale Public Schools libraries, and we would benefit from a thorough renovation to the space. We currently use two closets located in other areas of the school to store library books that are available for classroom use in multiple copies; this arrangement works but is certainly not ideal.

Other Considerations

Since the library is directly beside our main entrance and near the current office. We feel that this would be an ideal time to look at relocating the office the area currently used for choral music to bring the school up to current security standards. The space currently used as office space would be idea space to reconfigure as flexible small group space for speech, Learning Resource Center Support, and ESL. The combination of these changes would create one or to two additional rooms that could be used as classrooms.

Answers to Questions:

1. Please provide a detailed description of the entire scope of the proposed project.

For the reasons indicated earlier, if changes are made to the library, it would need to be razed and rebuilt. Architects have looked at the available space, made recommendations about additional square footage that would bring it into line with Edgewood's population and the other schools, and have recommended a design options for the new footprint.

We would also like to relocate the office to improve security to the school, and use existing office space for small group instruction which is currently taking place in a classroom. The relocation of the office to a space used by a classroom (room 19) is at the middle entrance on Roosevelt Place and provides a more logical front entrance to the school. It also allows for improved security with a double entry system. The net change in available classroom space from these renovations would give us one more classroom than we currently have available.

2. Why is the project needed in your building? Please include logistical, enrollment, infrastructure, curricular, security, and other current concerns that it will address.

The current Edgewood library serves the needs of our students and staff, but with many drawbacks. The structure was built in at least two separate construction projects and has several isolated spaces, with poor sight lines from the librarian's work space. Since it is relatively small, most of the bookcases are more than six feet high making them inaccessible to elementary students.

There are also significant infrastructure problems that affect the library. The HVAC system is inadequate and the space is frequently under repair. The library is built on a slab. Since the heat comes from the ceiling, the floor is often cold. The slab has also shifted, causing the floor to be uneven in many locations. In extreme cold weather, ice collection in the gutters and downspouts prevents water from draining properly, and causes flooding in the space. Water draining from the roof also floods the library in winter when the ground under the library is frozen. Our library is the smallest of all the Scarsdale Public School libraries, and inadequate for our current population. The building would benefit from a thorough renovation to the space. We currently use two closets located outside the library because there is insufficient space in the library.

The library is directly beside our main entrance and near the current office. We feel that this would be an ideal time to look at relocating the office to bring the school up to current security standards. The space currently used as office space would be ideal space to reconfigure as flexible small group space for speech, Learning Resource Center Support, and ESL. The combination of these changes would create one or two additional rooms in the remainder of the building that could be used as classrooms. Currently the speech teacher meets students in a renovated closet as does one of the learning resource teachers.

3. What are the implications of the project for emerging instructional methods and 21st century learning? Please describe some specific instructional plans for the space.

We hope that a future library space would be designed as a Media and Research Center, which would integrate the resources of the computer lab, and develop skills and dispositions consistent with 21st Century learning as detailed in Scarsdale Education for Tomorrow materials. The renovated library would promote collaboration and inquiry, providing all the literature, multimedia equipment, online resources such as videoconferencing, as well as teacher guidance that students might need to achieve curriculum goals. But more important, this space would be the centerpiece for developing the skillset and mindset of young people as they prepare for the global challenges of this century. These are the challenges for which the Scarsdale Education for Tomorrow is preparing young people. This space will help young students "Know, Think, and Act" on

these complex, global problems and move them to the front lines to be problem solvers and leaders in their fields.

4. Please describe the features of the space that will provide flexibility as new instructional methods are introduced.

We imagine a library space that has a sense of openness. There are no tall book stacks, pillars, or protruding walls, just open space suggesting a sense of freedom, honesty, and possibility. At the end of this room would be a glassed in technology center, in which there is visible evidence of students at work from inside the lab and outside the lab, but a partition that preserves the required ambiance on each side of the window. Ultimately, this renewed library space becomes a place where students, faculty, and community members can come together for mutually beneficial causes.

We do not currently have available space for a MakerSpace center, although the new Educational Foundation has provided seed funding for such a center. The changes proposed in the plan would give us several possible locations where those projects could occur, depending on the nature of the projects.

5. Does the project provide new opportunities for collaborative and interdisciplinary instruction? Please describe.

By having flexible space, classes can work together in teams. Buddy classes can work together in a multiplicity of ways. By linking the computer resources nearer the library (which is done in every other elementary school in the District), there can be a more natural integration of the varied resources available to the students while they research.

6. How does the project contribute to the sense of community and connectedness in the building?

The library provides a place for many in the school to gather. Groups of students and teachers meet together throughout the day, including during the lunch hour and after school on projects that are important to the life of the school. These meetings currently occur in both the library and the computer room, but could conceivably take place in a central location where information and technology are seen and used in tandem. This space would be used when the faculty comes together for meetings and special events, for receptions with parents, and for special student programs that take place for an entire grade. Events such as news programs, video interviews with special guests, and alumni programs would all occur in this new space.

7. Does the project scope address specialized instructional programs such as the arts, physical education, special education services, etc. Please describe the specific instructional uses for the new space.

By moving the ELL, speech and Learning Resources together, there can be more sharing of specialized resources and improved communications among the professionals delivering services to students.

8. Does the project incorporate the use of technology as an integrated feature of the space?

The current library was built before the advent of computers in education. The new library would have the infrastructure to support the use of technology throughout the library. By having a section that is specifically focused on technology it will allow flexible space that can be used in a variety of ways as changes occur in the future as well as integrate currently with the research and presentation work going on in our school.

9. Will the project reflect environmental and sustainability improvements? Connections to the outdoors?

The new library will have an up-to-date heating and cooling system. No longer will there be a flat roof that leaks and a drainage system that floods the library. Nor will there be a heating system that either overheats or under-heats the library. Windows will be more energy efficient and insulation in exterior walls will be improved. Air conditioning will provide a better condition for technology equipment and issues with mold in damp humid weather will be reduced, making the library a healthier environment for all who use it.

10. If the project doesn't get the green light, how will the problems identified above be resolved?

We will continue to use these spaces as we use them today. Library and media services will continue to be more separate than is ideal. Books and other materials will be stored in closets outside the library. Small group instruction will take place in spaces not intended for that purpose, and in full-size classrooms scattered throughout the school, when smaller spaces would be more efficient and effective. If the decision is made to enhance security by providing personnel (as was done at the Middle and High Schools), the new office configuration will provide that function effectively.