Phase 3

Together · We · Plan

Task Force Meeting #2

November 4, 2026

Agenda

1. **Follow-Up on Meeting #1**
   a. Advisory Committee
   b. Summary of Input
   c. FAQs Follow-Up
2. **Review Ed Specs**
3. **Small Group Discussion**
4. **Next Steps & Homework**





Follow-Up on Meeting #1

Advisory Committee and Meeting #1 Input

Establishing the Advisory Committee

- The Task Force nominated co-chairs after the first meeting
- Six nominees were selected to join the Core Team to form the Advisory Committee:

David Chang

Patrick Briscoe

Michele Elliot

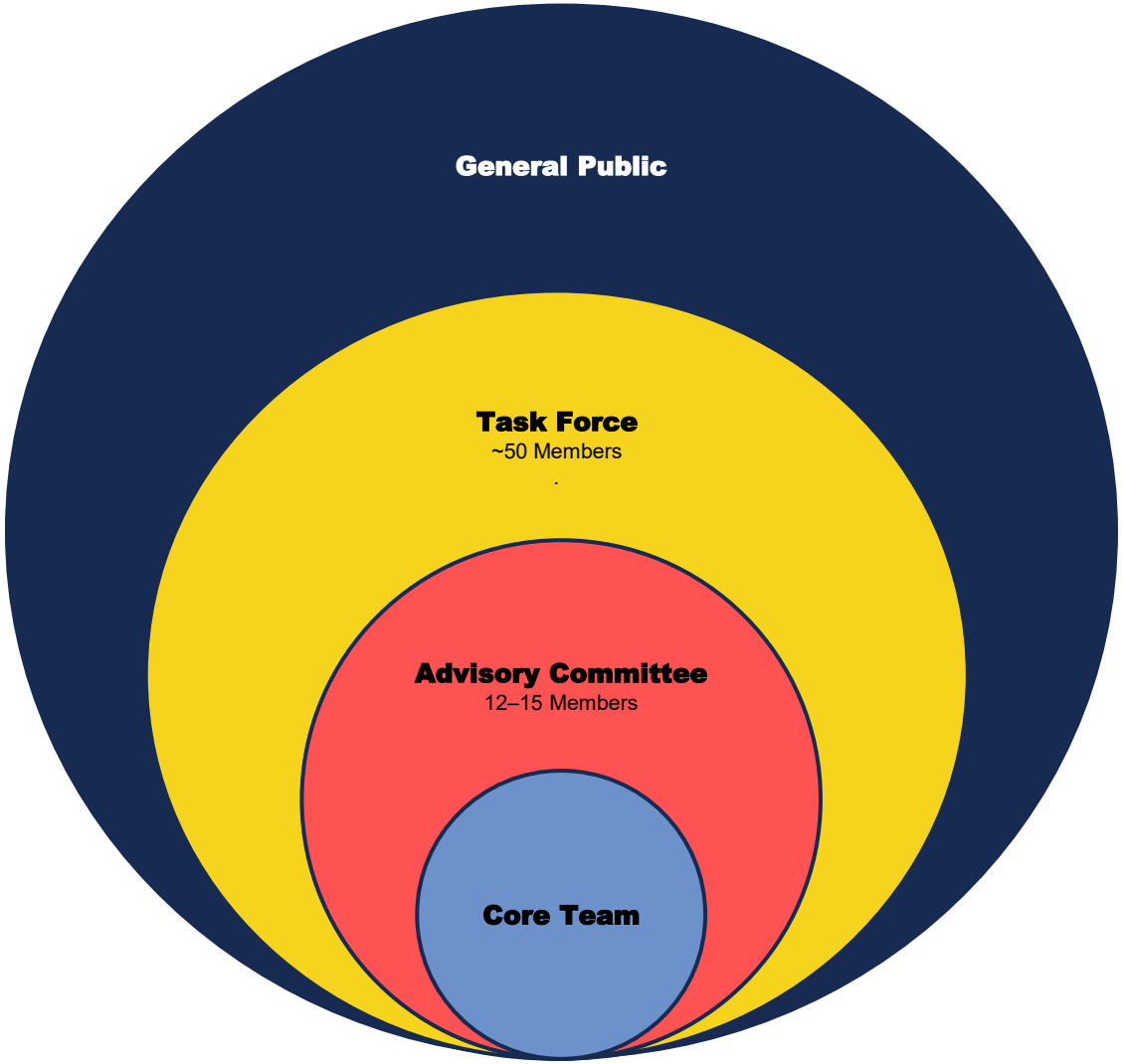
Karmyn Metzger

Jen Miller

Margaret Romoser

Role of the Advisory Committee

- The public will participate in two rounds of engagement that will guide the future of the school district's elementary and preschool facilities. The first round will capture ideas and values and the second round will solidify the community's priorities.
- The Task Force refines public input into strategies and outcomes and will shape the final report to the school board.
- **The Advisory Committee processes feedback from the Task Force and provides direction to the engagement process and report development.**
- The Core Team manages the logistics, schedule and scope of the process.



Recap

1. Task Force Norms
2. Top-of-Mind
3. Engagement Feedback
4. Aha! Moments



Task Force Norms

1. **Listen first.** Hear each other out before responding. Ask questions and avoid making assumptions.
2. **Keep an open mind.** Be open to different perspectives and curious about new ideas.
3. **Be respectful.** Maintain respect for each other, even during disagreement.
4. **Be inclusive.** Be thoughtful and aware of how this process will impact every part of the community. Use an equity lens
5. **Remember the big picture.** This is a community-wide process focused on the future.

Top-of-Mind Comments Shared

- What can the district afford? What is the estimated cost for different options?
- What is the district's current and projected enrollment?
- Could the Task Force be provided standards or examples of elementary/preschool facilities?
- What is the feasibility of renovation/rebuild/new build and timeline?
- Will interviews be conducted with administration, staff?

How do we motivate people to participate?

- Establish the “Why,” both “Why should you care” and “Why we are doing this”
- Keep it simple
- Go to where people are and offer multiple formats to participate
- Utilize school district communication channels (social media, email, newsletter, etc.)
- Encourage word-of-mouth and personal communication, try to bring in “unlikely” participants
- Explain costs, facility standards, examples (Round 2)
- Close the feedback loop (Round 2)
- Tie into existing events and provide incentives
- Ask people to share their stories

How do we ensure people think about the needs of the entire district, not just their school?

- Cultivate “community-wide” mindset
- Ask district-wide questions
- Pull specifics up into district-wide outcomes
- Show needs across all buildings
- Explain modern learning needs
- Involve students, teachers, staff
- Establish a baseline (Round 2)
- Prioritize values and outcomes (Round 2)
- Get people to know schools other than their own

What are your reactions to the school hop format?

- Strong support for the format
- Share data collected during events
- Offer additional formats for those who cannot attend
- Get people to schools other than their own
- Encourage people to attend two schools, possible on the same night, “school swaps”
- Offer bus transport between schools
- Visit a “modern” school example
- Engage students as part of the tour
- Offer childcare

Where in the community should the engagement hubs be located?

- Rec center and community centers (12)
- Farmers' Market (8)
- Senior centers and senior living (8)
- Faith communities (6)
- Grocery stores and local businesses (5)
- School events (4)
- Youth sports and early childhood (4)
- Civic groups, clubs (3)
- Food pantries (3)
- Libraries (8)

Is there anything we missed in our approach? Any additional comments?

- Ensure all schools are included in the process
- Create and utilize and outreach materials
- Ensure process is high quality
- Include input from teachers and staff
- Ensure language access and translation services
- Consider future skills and workforce
- Take advantage of marketing partnerships and communications

Share your “Aha!” Moments

- Enrollment differences between elementary schools
- Difference between Phase 1 and 2 considering a few buildings, versus Phase 3 considering 12
- Surprises about site size and land usability
- Question about a consolidated table with school information
- Question about how classroom spaces can and are used, and what the needs for flexible space look like – more information to come!

Etc…

Homework: FAQs Comments or Questions

1. Please write any comments or questions about the FAQs on an index card.

   We will address these before our next meeting.



Educational Specifications

Andy Knopp, Thomas Porter Architects

Purpose of Today's Introduction

- Provide a clear, high-level understanding of Educational Specifications ("Ed Specs")
- Explain how Ed Specs guide school planning and design
- Offer a broad overview of the major sections in the 2019 Elementary Ed Specs
- Give context so the document is easier to engage with during small group review

What are Education Specifications?

Ed Specs = Design Requirements

They define:

- How learning should be supported
- What types of spaces relate to each other
- Expectations for site, safety, technology, and sustainability

Ed Specs guide architects *before* any drawings or design concepts are created.

Why Ed Specs Matter

Ed Specs help ensure that school facilities:

- Align with educational goals
- Support modern instructional practices
- Provide consistency across multiple elementary schools
- Reflect community values
- Guide long-term capital planning

How Ed Specs Are Developed

A collaborative process involving:

- Teachers and instructional staff
- Administrators and district leadership
- Parents and community members
- City partners
- Architects and planners

Input is synthesized into a clear, actionable framework for future facilities.

How Ed Specs Are Used

Architects use Ed Specs to:

- Evaluate existing buildings
- Shape renovation or replacement options
- Plan site circulation and neighborhood integration
- Size classrooms and shared spaces
- Establish adjacencies and functional relationships
- Integrate safety, technology, and sustainability from the start

District leaders use Ed Specs to guide long-term investment decisions.

Worthington's 2019 Elementary Ed Specs

The mission statement sets the tone for the Ed Specs and reflects the district's values at the time.

The following mission statement was written as a collaboration of the groups' effort.

Mission Statement

The Worthington Elementary School is an inclusive community, a culture of joyful and fun experiences. Our elementary schools will be safe and healthy buildings, of timeless spaces, encouraging connections that will provide a foundation for lifelong learning.

Executive Summary

An Educational Specification is a document created in the pre-design phase of a school building as a way of setting preliminary parameters and goals. These specifications are given to the architects of a building who will put the specifications to work in the design phase. This document frames the educational specifications for each type of Elementary school building Worthington has, setting customized parameters by the capacity (or amount of enrolled students) of the building.



Worthington City Schools

Elementary School Educational Sp

2019 Mission Statement

“The Worthington Elementary School is an inclusive community, a culture of joyful and fun experiences. Our elementary schools will be safe and healthy buildings, of timeless spaces, encouraging connections that will provide a foundation for lifelong learning.”

The Four Essential Elements

The Ed Specs are organized around four pillars:

- Site Standards
- Technology
- Safety
- Sustainability

These elements help ensure facilities support learning and long-term stewardship.

Essential Elements of an Educational Specification
Sustainability, Safety, Site Standards, & Technology

Participants were asked to frame the most important aspects of each of four elements, following a presentation on their meanings and potential implementations. The topics were: Sustainability, Safety, Site Standards, and Technology.









Metaphors for Learning Environments & Resources

Building on both the Design Principals for Learning and the Design Principles for Learning Environments, the Planning Team facilitated a series an activity with the Elementary School Planning Committee designed to imagine and develop space typologies for learning environments that support and nurture the desired learning objectives. We used Dr. David D. Thornburg's landmark thesis on *"Metaphors for Primordial Learning Environments"* (http://tcpd.org/thornburg/Handouts/Campfires.pdf) as a launching point for this work.

Metaphors for Learning Environments

Campfire



experts/story-tellers

a place characterized by communication flowing from one to many, where everyone can focus on the person(s) talking or presenting

Watering-Hole



peers

a place for exchanging communication, typically placed in a location you would naturally move to or through; where people gather in groups of varies sizes and times, and where you might bump into someone

Cave



oneself

a place for individual study, quiet reflection, to explore questions, make connections and experience creative flow; a place where communication flows within oneself, requiring a physical frame that promotes seclusion

Life



real world

a place that encourages immersive student-centered hands-on real-world learning experiences where students can apply what they have learned and create meaning

Mountaintop

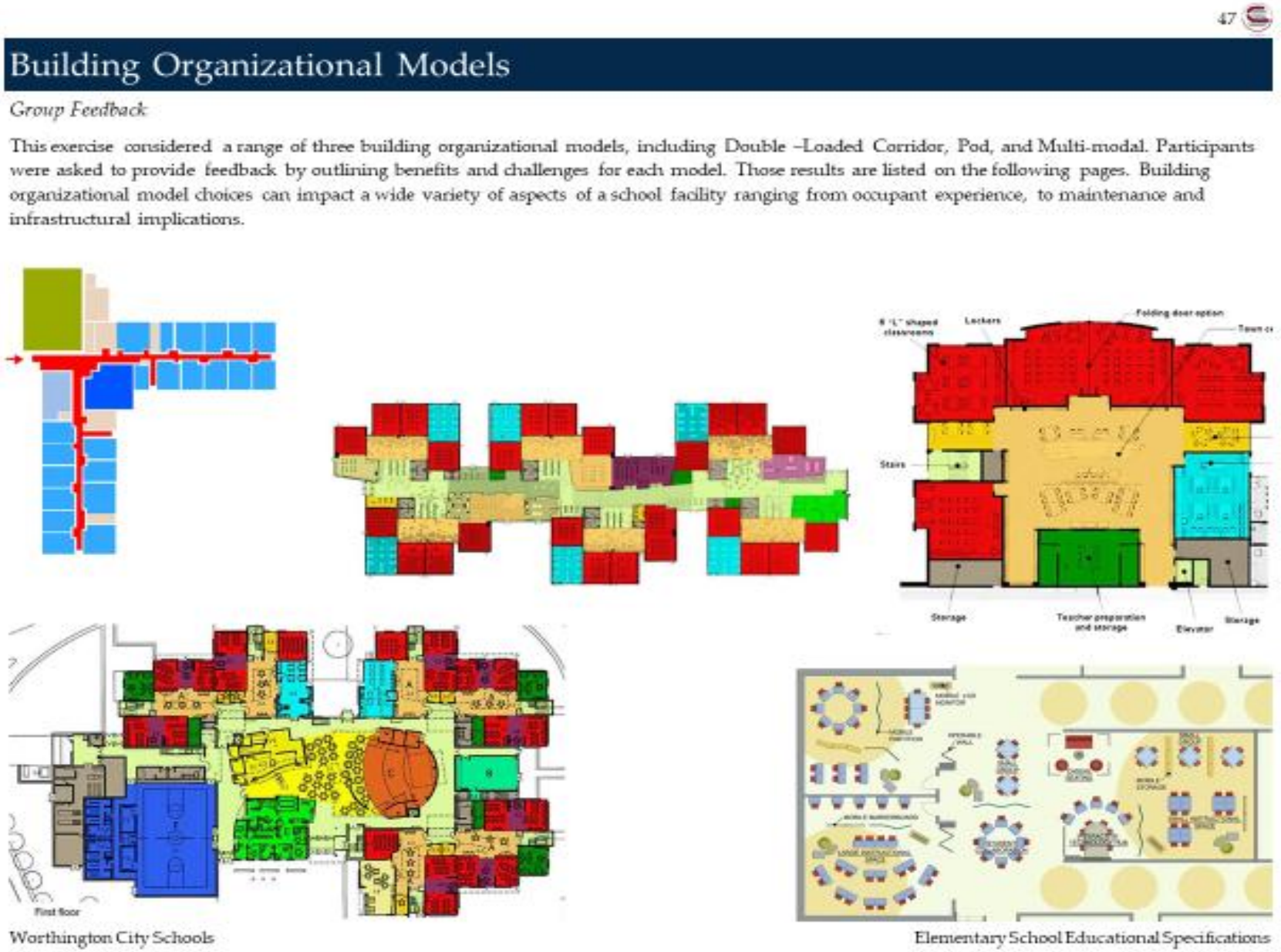


showing & sharing

a place where one person or a small group communicates towards the rest of the world, showing what she, he or they can do with what has been learned

Learning Environment Metaphors

These metaphors illustrate different modes of learning and help architects design flexible, supportive space.



Building Organizational Models

These models show different ways elementary schools can be organized to support instruction, collaboration, and circulation.

Ed Specs as Living Documents

Ed Specs are periodically revisited to ensure they continue to:

- Support the district's educational goals
- Reflect community priorities
- Align with evolving instructional practices and technologies

This task force will explore the 2019 document with that spirit in mind.

Transition to Small-Group Review

You'll now have time to explore the Ed Specs document in the small groups. Thank you for your engagement and commitment to this process.



Discussion

How do we build on the Ed Specs framework?
What changes might need to be made?

Small Group Discussion – General Reactions

1. Does the mission statement still describe what we want our elementary schools to be? If not, what would you change or add?

2. Should these four essential elements be a starting point for how we look at Worthington Schools' facilities? Is there anything missing?

3. What has changed since 2019 that might not be reflected?

4. What larger community benefit might come from this work?

5. The preschool was not included in the ed specs report. How might the four essential elements apply to preschools? What adjustments might need to be made?

Small Group Discussion – Deep Dive

1. Site Standards calls for a continuation of "neighborhood elementaries." Is that the right approach, or does it need to be reaffirmed or questioned by the public?

2. How have considerations around Technology changed for elementary education? How could this be accounted for?

3. Do the Safety standards seem like a good baseline for all elementary facilities?

4. Are there any elements of Sustainability that are not captured in the Ed Specs?



Next Steps

Preparation and homework prior to next meeting.

Important Dates

Month	Date	Event
January	Wed 1/20	**Task Force Meeting #3**
February	Mon 2/1	**Round 1 Engagement Begins (Hubs and Online)**
February	Sat 2/20	**School Hop Day 1**
March	Sat 3/6	**School Hop Day 2**
March	Fri 3/12	**Round 1 Engagement Closes**
March	Wed 3/24	**Task Force Meeting #4**
April	Wed 4/28	**Task Force Meeting #5**

Next Steps and Homework

Meeting #2 Follow up

1. Talking Points – Ed Specs

Prepare for the next meeting on January 20, 2027

1. Floor plans for each school
2. Key Takeaways on how the district's buildings compare to the OSDM standards

Thank You!

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