



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 19, 2023
TO: Chair Hale and Joint Assembly School District Facilities Committee
FROM: Katie Koester, Engineering & Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Draft School Facilities Evaluation Matrix

The purpose of this memo is to continue the committee work on establishing matrix variables for the evaluation of school facilities. Staff has vetted the matrix variables established at the last meeting with the two high schools as an example (attached). The memo is broken up into two sections: 1) Approved Variables Incorporated into the Draft Matrix and 2) Proposed Additional Variables. The first section represents columns the committee has debated and decided changes made by the committee at the May meeting. For example, the committee requested simplifying 'operational' use by breaking it out into categories, for example. It also shows amendments the committee made, like adding the category 'Impact on Quality of Education.'

The second section contains unadopted variables that came up as recommendations as staff worked on applying the variables to actual schools. The committee needs to discuss the variables, their value to the matrix and decide whether to include them.

It is my advice that the committee walk through each one of the variables and provide staff feedback on the definitions and the content for the two schools populated in the draft matrix. A key with these definitions will accompany the matrix as it moves through the process.

Section 1 Approved Variables Incorporated into the Draft Matrix

Quantitative

This section reflects numbers and metrics that can be used in analysis. The definitions below attempt to help provide narrative and context to the figures.

Enrollment versus capacity (as a percentage).

This category reflects how many students are enrolled in the school versus the capacity according to the Uniform Building Code.

Capital Cost of Renovations: This figure was pulled directly from the JSD 6-year CIP. The 6-year CIP is based on the renewal and replacement schedule submitted to DEED annually. It is not a comprehensive condition assessment.

Question for the committee. What level of detail do you want for a condition assessment?

School size and impact on funding formula: This figure reflects the annual loss in state funding after a four-year step down. It is based on FY23 enrollment and will change annually.

Maintenance and Operations: What would the savings be in M&O by consolidating schools.

Note for committee: Staff recommends breaking this category out into instructional and non-instructional operations (see proposed additions in next section).

Qualitative

This category helps decisionmakers think about the variables that are more difficult to measure but no less important. 'Operational Use' is broken out into 3 separate metrics. Some of these uses are determined by the Pupil Teacher Ratio set by the Board of Education each year, others are determined on the number of students identified with special needs and the federal regulations associated, and others are set by which special programs are housed at individual school sites.

Operational Use, Special Services: Schools serve programmatic and educational needs and buildings are used for special education classroom use, related services (OT/PT, SLP, School Psychologist) needs, small group instruction, etc. This category reflects the classrooms reserved for those purposes.

Operational Use, Classrooms used for Instruction: This category reflects the number of classrooms the state considers instructional for budget purposes. It includes administrative space, computer labs, etc.

Question for Committee: Discuss if that definition of instructional space serves the purposes of this matrix.

Operational Use, pupil teacher ratio: The pupil teacher ratio is set by the Board of Education annually and varies by grade level.

Question for Committee: Would it be useful to understand best practices by grade level for student teacher ratio?

Cultural Impact: Often a school has a strong identity and sense of place; students, faculty, teachers and community members develop a culture rooted in the facility and what it represents. Any changes need to be considered the cultural impact.

Question for committee: Discuss and highlight any additions.

Impact on Quality of Education: Speaks to the JSD mission statement "In Juneau, we partner to provide each student with meaningful, relevant, and rigorous learning experiences in order to graduate diverse, engaged citizens ready for a changing world."

Question for committee: This category was added at the last meeting. Would be helpful to get more feedback from the committee on the definition.

Impact to the Neighborhood: School facilities are often used outside the school day and are key gathering spaces for community functions. What impact would repurposing a facility have on those uses?

Question for committee: Discuss and highlight any additions.

Section 2: Proposed Additional Variables

Predicted Enrollment

Question for committee: Does the committee want to know predicted future enrollment by grade level band? For example, what enrollment vs capacity is in 10 years for grades 8-12? Would it be useful for planning purposes to set a target enrollment that could flag for the committee when enrollment was expected to dip below a certain level? What is that percentage. (Note: some of this work may require additional analysis by Erickson group and according to JSD can only be done on the basis of grade level, not individual schools.)

Maintenance and Operations (non-instructional): This figure reflects the maintenance and operations line item in the JSD budget for this facility. If this facility is consolidated into another, some, but not all of those expenses will be transferred to the new facility.

Question for committee: I recommend replacing the current M&O variable with the more tangible non-instructional number for this level of analysis. This level of analysis would be most efficient once the universe of schools under consideration is narrowed.

Cost to Mothball: Even abandoning a building for the short term has a cost, this figure includes basic heat utilities and property insurance. It does not include deferred maintenance if a facility were to sit idle for years on end.

Question for committee: Is this useful information?

Opportunities

Alternative Facility Needs: This reflects alternative facility needs in the community this facility could serve.

Note for committee: This will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the location, size and condition of the school.

Can it be Repurposed and at what cost?: This figure reflects the cost of reconfiguring a building to meet an identified community need.

Note for committee: This number can only be refined after determining the alternative needs the facility would fill. However, staff could provide generic number per square foot for remodeling.

Recommendation:

Discuss, provide amendments or recommendations to be incorporated in a future draft matrix.