

Harrisonburg High School Space Study Committee
Report on Visit to HHS (week of March 20, 2017)

Several members of the High School Space Study Committee visited the high school during the week of March 20, 2017, to tour the school and see the capacity issues firsthand. Mr. Miller and Ms. Prieto acted as our tour guides. The following are our observations. It is important to note that these issues are going to become more severe as the school continues to grow.

- Loss of engagement and community (important for effective teaching & learning)
 - It is becoming very difficult for the staff, teachers and students to know one another.
 - It is easier for students to get lost in the crowd.
 - It is more difficult to provide personal support for students that are at-risk due to challenges at home or in class, higher risk of drop-out
- Fewer opportunities for leadership (very important for scholarship and college applications!)
 - more students but just one valedictorian, one club president, one winner of the \$10,000 DNR scholarship, one football team, one soccer team, one debate team, etc.
 - less recognition for accomplishments
- Cafeteria is too small
 - Students must stand in long lines and then do not have enough time to eat in the remaining minutes.
 - Many students were eating lunch while sitting on the floor. Mr. Miller and Ms. Prieto reported that the students choose to do this because the kids want down-time to eat with their friends, but they may not be able to get seats at tables. While there are enough seats, they often aren't together.
 - An industrial-sized freezer has been installed on the loading dock because there isn't enough space in the cafeteria.
 - Cafeteria staff must work in tight quarters (safety issue)
- Not enough class rooms
 - Teachers must share classrooms
 - Students may have the same class in different rooms each day so that they can use specialized spaces (e.g. labs). Some classes just require specialized space.
 - 40 teachers use carts to wheel their materials from classroom to classroom
 - The dance classes use the auditorium but get bumped to other spaces whenever there is an event (which happens frequently)
 - Six mobile classrooms have been installed in the parking lot. Two more will be installed this summer.
 - It takes 20 minutes for a student to take a bathroom break from the mobile classrooms due to distance to bathroom and security requirements at building entrance.
- Not enough space
 - Every bit of space is being used
 - Storage closets have been converted to offices and are shared by multiple staff
 - The number of creative solutions that can be used are almost exhausted.
- Less effective teaching time
 - larger class sizes cause less-one-on-one time

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- ESL students need MORE one-on-one time
- Less time for individual students to ask questions or demonstrate what they have learned
- Hallways and stairways are very crowded
 - Causes delays in moving from classroom to classroom
 - More "rub" in the hallways can lead to friction and conflict
 - Reduced opportunities for interacting between classes
 - Little opportunity to go to one's locker between classes.
- More students, staff and visitors but less parking spaces
 - Six (soon to be eight) mobile classrooms have eliminated two rows of parking
 - More buses occupy more parking spaces
- Increased travel time and expense to participate in team competitions
 - HHS is no longer in the same VHSL divisions as other nearby schools
 - Several hours are required to travel to/from other large schools for VHSL division competitions
 - Increased travel time reduces the time available for athletes to spend on studying, relaxing, working a part-time job, etc.
- When students enter HHS mid-year, it may not be possible to get them in the right class. They can do Blue Streaks Academy, but this may not always be the best option.