

2. Educational Program

Please note the following within the plan:

- black font = existing conditions
- blue font = expectations/vision for new building
- Requires more info

Wahconah Regional High School is a comprehensive high school with a talented, dedicated, and professional staff. Our school currently serves approximately 550 students in grades 9-12 from the seven towns of the Central Berkshire Regional School District: Becket, Cummington, Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru, Washington, and Windsor. We have been able to maintain our commitment to excellence, which began in 1961, due to the highly supportive communities our students and families live in. Wahconah Regional High School offers comprehensive opportunities in all areas consistent with traditionally larger schools yet has the benefit of a small school feel.

DRA (Drumme Rosane Anderson, Inc.), in conjunction with Dr. Frank Locker, conducted a full visioning and programming process for Wahconah Regional High School (see appendix). A group of 40 constituents representing staff, students and community members participated in two days of visioning sessions facilitated by Dr. Frank Locker. Additionally, four Community Workshops were conducted in CBRSD towns for the purpose of receiving community feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders. The entire process explored the school's existing physical and educational conditions and helped to envision and define our educational needs, goals, and priorities moving forward. Based on all of that input, the following themes emerged as the most important aspects of a new and/or renovated building:

- Promotes student engagement
- Creates flexible and collaborative spaces
- Supports 21st Century Learning Skills
- Design an environmentally friendly facility
- Ensures safety and security for all

A. Grade and School Configuration Policies

Wahconah Regional High School serves grades 9-12. The district has proposed to study only the grade configuration of 9-12. The district currently works closely with the district's middle school, Nessacus Regional Middle School and other sending communities to ensure a smooth transition to Wahconah Regional High School. There are several orientation activities beginning in the late winter of the year prior to students entering ninth grade. Additionally, at the start of the school year there is a step up day for students entering grade 9 to attend school for half a day, as the only group present in the building.

Academic classrooms are generally organized by department. One half of the building (B corridor) is dedicated toward science, technology, and engineering while the remainder of the academic classrooms are comprised of the remaining general education and elective classes. Special Education teachers have classrooms for direct instruction grouped together as well. Those classes happen to be centrally located in the building.

Wahconah is moving toward a model of organization that ensures maximum flexibility with regards to instructional delivery now and in the future. Therefore, it is recommended that the new or renovated Wahconah be organized into academic classroom "pods". These pods could be organized to serve our students in the following ways:

- Departmental Pods
 - Each core department (Math, Social Studies, English, Modern/Classical Languages) would have a pod
 - Science could be organized into a pod OR interspersed among the other 4 pods
- Thematic Pods

- 2 pods would be dedicated to STEM
- 2 pods would be dedicated to Humanities
- **Small Interdisciplinary Learning Communities**
 - Each pod would consist of a group of classrooms and teachers to accommodate the core subjects (English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Modern and Classical Languages), a science lab classroom, and a CTE (Tech/Engineering/Robotics/Media Arts/Makerspace) room.
 - The CTE room could have some classes scheduled into it (as needed) as well as be available at other times for classes to use within the pod.
 - Although departments would not be in physical proximity, the departmental model would still exist for management and organizational purposes.

No matter the intent or usage of the pod, each pod would have a breakout space(s) to promote student collaboration, group projects, and presentations. Also included in (or near) each pod would be a special education/academic support room and a teacher planning room. Each planning room would contain: workstations for approximately 5 or 6 teachers, a kitchenette, teachers' toilet room, and small inner offices to accommodate 2 department chairs per pod.

Each pod should also provide support spaces such as student toilet rooms, storage, and educational network infrastructure.

See also the Adjacency Diagram in this document.

B. Class Size Policies

There is not a specific class size policy in either the Wahconah Regional High School Handbook or the School Committee Policy Manual. Wahconah offers three levels of courses for core academic subjects: College Prep, Honors, and AP. Effort is made during the scheduling process to limit class size for most college prep classes while allowing larger class sizes for honors courses. Some class sizes are limited due to the space in which the instruction takes place (i.e. Art with 17 seats available, Computer Programming with 24 seats available, Music Production with 8 seats available, etc.). Class size is prioritized to be both equitable and functional for the course content. Class sizes currently range significantly being as small as 10 and as large as 30 due to interest, available seating, and sections.

The program challenge of a school our size is the ability to maintain comprehensive course offerings and levels to meet the needs of all students. Our intent is to maintain our commitment to relatively small and manageable class sizes. We do our best to offer an array of elective classes, however many of those classes become “singletons” during the scheduling process. For many of our core classes we offer 3 levels (college prep, honors and AP). Although it is expected that we will have a slight decline in enrollment, there are a few courses that have enough multiple sections that would allow for a proportional decline in the number of sections. Based upon this and the large number of singletons, the number of sections of classes in the future will be comparable to current numbers.

Singleton Classes (40)

Accounting II
 Accounting III
 Algebra and Stats Advanced
 Applied Language Arts
 Applied Mathematics
 Art Major
 Basic Law
 Biology AP

Classes with Multiple Levels (17)

Algebra I
 Algebra II
 Biology
 Calculus
 Chemistry
 Economics
 English 9
 English 10

Calculus AB AP
 Calculus Honors
 Chemistry AP
 Computer Building and Repair
 Computer Graphics and Web Design
 Concert Band
 Cyber Literacy in the Digital Age
 Elective Drafting
 Entrepreneurship
 French I
 French II
 French III Honors
 French IV Honors / French V Honors
 Guitar Advanced
 Guitar Beginner
 Guitar Ensemble
 Intro to Computer Programming
 Intro to Music Theory (every other year)
 Latin II
 Latin III Honors
 Latin IV Honors
 Mixed Chorus
 Music Theory AP (every other year)
 Paint and Design
 Personal Money Management
 Physics I AP
 Robotics
 Spanish I
 Spanish IV Honors
 Sports and Entertainment Marketing
 Statistics AP
 Video Game Design

English 11
 English 12

 Environmental Science
 Geometry
 Modern World History
 Physics
 U.S. History I
 U.S. History II
 U.S. Government and Politics

To best use educational space for classrooms, our intent is to have a variety of classroom sizes in each pod. Ideally we would like full size classrooms for classes with larger enrollments and **seminar rooms** for classes in the range of 12-15 students. These smaller classrooms would be ideal for some of the electives and other classes with smaller enrollments and would maximize use of space.

Wahconah offers a wide range of science courses with multiple levels and has strong enrollment numbers. In the 2018-19 school year, 103% (this % was revised when we factored in the single semester courses) of students were enrolled in science classes, although there is only a three year science requirement. This means many students choose to take 4 years of science and many enroll in multiple science classes in the same year. Therefore, ample science laboratory space is important to meet the demand for science classes at Wahconah. Wahconah offers a Greenhouse Management course, within the science department, that has 71 students enrolled for the 2018-2019 academic year. A greenhouse with sufficient space to maintain the program is needed.

C. School Scheduling Method

Wahconah Regional High School has a seven period schedule with one drop. Academic periods range from 55-56 minutes, with one 60 minute class supplemented by a 30-minute lunch. This schedule was implemented in order to share staff with the middle school. Between 3-5 teachers will start their day at the high school, teach the first two periods and then travel to the middle school to finish their day. The scheduling process is completed collaboratively between building administration, content coordinators, and guidance.

Graduation Requirements

All students at Wahconah Regional High School must accumulate a minimum number of credits in certain curriculum areas. A designated number of credits are assigned to each course of study, based on the following criteria:

- Five (5.0) credits will be awarded for the successful completion of each full year's course meeting every day.
- Two and one-half (2.5) credits will be awarded for successful completion of each semester course which meets every day, and courses which meet every other day for the entire year.

In order to graduate from Wahconah Regional High School, students must earn credits in the following curriculum areas:

- English20 credits
- Mathematics..... 20 credits
- Science.....15 credits
- Social Studies20 credits
- Electives.....30 credits
- Physical Wellness 10 credits

115 TOTAL CREDITS, the minimum required for graduation.

ADD EARLY RELEASE, ASSEMBLY (AM AND PM) AND 2 HOUR DELAY SCHEDULES WHEN READY

Add: a typical student's schedule

WRHS 6-Period Schedule - Starting September 2018										
Period	Start Time	End Time	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Homeroom	7:52 AM	7:55 AM	Homeroom							
Period 1	7:58 AM	8:54 AM	Block 1	Block 1	Block 1	Block 1	Block 1	Block 1	Block 2	
Period 2	8:57 AM	9:53 AM	Block 2	Block 2	Block 2	Block 2	Block 2	Block 3	Block 3	
Period 3	9:56 AM	10:52 AM	Block 3	Block 3	Block 3	Block 3	Block 4	Block 4	Block 4	
Period 4	10:55 AM	12:25 PM	Block 4	Block 4	Block 4	Block 5	Block 5	Block 5	Block 5	
Period 5	12:28 PM	1:23 PM	Block 5	Block 5	Block 6					
Period 6	1:26 PM	2:21 PM	Block 6	Block 7						

The programming process utilized the above schedule that we will be implementing in 2018-19. This schedule is based on a 42 period cycle (7 days x 6 periods with one drop per day). The ultimate purpose of this schedule is to maintain the length of each class period (at least 56 minutes) in an effort to create the most engaging learning experience possible. We plan to continue with 3 lunch seatings as well. Moving forward, it is anticipated that more staff will be shared with the middle school. The new schedule will allow teachers to teach periods 1 and 2 at Wahconah and move to Nessacus Middle School for the remainder of the day. Staff sharing is one strategy that will help us keep our robust offerings despite declining enrollment.

D. Teaching Methodology and Structure

Teaching methodology and structure is rather traditional with teachers delivering instruction in owned classrooms. Due to lack of room availability, there are currently two general education teachers who travel from room to room for their classes. Instructional approaches include but are not limited to discussions, project-based learning, direct instruction, collaborative learning, small group learning and modeling. Fieldwork and laboratory work are common particularly in science, technology, and engineering. Authentic assessment practices include productions, speeches, podcasts, published writing and portfolios. Some staff members are actively teaching students how to develop a more positive academic digital footprint. Additionally, an increasing number of teachers are utilizing technology for flipped classrooms and using Google Classroom and the Google platform to actively engage students in the learning experience. Also, an increasing number of teachers are attempting to create a more active learning environment which includes students moving around frequently. In order to compensate for limited space, teachers frequently use free space in the hallways to conduct lessons in physics, robotics, yoga, etc. During warmer months, physical wellness and science classes make frequent use of the outdoors to conduct classes.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

All departments are transitioning to an instructional model that is more inclusive to all learners. Specifically, departments are working to embed Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices within their lessons. UDL is a set of principles for curriculum development and instructional practices that give all students equal opportunities to learn. UDL represents a movement away from a single, “one size fits all” approach. The concept of UDL is based on flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs. UDL is a brain-based practice centered on establishing firm learning goals that can be achieved by flexible means.

Moving forward, the educational facility needs to be universally designed in order to support more progressive teaching methodologies as noted in our visioning sessions. It also needs to be flexible enough to accommodate new and innovative pedagogical changes. Teachers at Wahconah are already moving in this direction but are often limited by our current building. Educational spaces need to do a better job of supporting direct teaching (10-15 minutes of teacher centered instruction and modeling), small group collaboration, project based learning, and social emotional learning. Our visioning process supports the idea that this can best be accomplished for our school with academic pods. These small learning communities offer maximum flexibility in terms of how they could be configured to meet changing needs. Each community would include general classrooms, CTE spaces, break-out spaces, teacher planning rooms, and special education support. Classrooms with non-traditional shapes (e.g. “triangular”) also support the types of teaching strategies that have been identified by our visioning process as progressive, effective, and desirable.

E. Teacher Planning and Room Assignment Policies

Teachers are currently assigned to rooms and effectively have ownership of the space. As stated above, there are currently two general education teachers who travel from room to room for their classes. The contract for teachers is based on five teaching periods plus a duty period which can be assigned by the administration to lunch or directed study. The majority of teachers host the directed study within their classroom. If their room is being used by another teacher, the directed study takes place in the cafeteria.

Teachers have limited opportunities to collaborate during the school day. Administration sets aside time during what would typically be a duty period for teachers in co-taught classes to plan at least once per a 7 day cycle. Teachers are contractually expected to attend one faculty meeting per month (for an hour). Efforts have been made recently to make this a more collaborative experience for the staff. Additionally, teachers are expected to take part in one department meeting per month (for an hour). However, cross-curricular planning and collaboration only happens after school, if at all.

There are currently two designated spaces for teacher planning. One is referred to as the “Teacher’s Room” and the other is referred to as “Room B1”. The Teacher’s Room is typically used for lunch and for any teacher who cannot access their own classroom for planning. Room B1 is used for teacher lunch for 90 minutes per day and for ELL services as well as SST/IEP team meetings for the remainder of the day. The back room of the library is also accessible for teachers, but is limited in seating for upwards of 3 teachers. Due to a lack of common space for teacher planning, most teachers typically do their planning in the isolation of their own classrooms.

Our visioning sessions revealed that students should be scheduled into the most appropriate educational space rather than the room that is owned by a teacher. The idea of having classrooms and seminar rooms grouped within a pod means that scheduling will be highly dependent upon class size and the types of teaching methodologies that are used for a particular course. As a result, teachers may not have their own classrooms but will most likely move to the classroom that is the best fit for their class size and educational space needs. If teachers do not have a set classroom, teacher planning rooms will be an essential component of each pod.

Teacher planning rooms will help facilitate collaboration and possibly interdisciplinary work as teachers will be in the same planning room during prep time. The teacher planning rooms should have enough space for each teacher to have a workstation, small conference table, kitchenette, and copier. Since teachers may not have their own desks in their own classrooms it is extremely important that they have a dedicated space to work, plan, and keep personal belongings. Ideally these spaces would also have a small private space for phone calls and discussions.

Ideally each pod’s teacher planning room would also have two small offices for Content Coordinators (department heads) that could be utilized for private conversations and storage for confidential information.

Although scheduling courses and teachers into each pod could still take place at an administrative level, given the flexibility that comes with a pod design, room assignments could potentially be determined collaboratively by the teachers within each pod based upon class size, educational needs, and spatial adjacencies. For this reason it is important that classrooms are flexible for multiple disciplines. This is especially important if the new facility has fewer classrooms than teachers. Professional development will be needed to prepare staff for this kind of model in terms of team building exercises, interdisciplinary protocols, and room scheduling protocols. This PD could be provided during the construction phase to help teachers prepare for the changes.

F. Pre-Kindergarten Program

None.

G. Kindergarten Program

None.

H. Lunch Programs

Wahconah’s lunch program is organized into three 30-minute blocks. The first lunch accommodates science classes so labs can run without interruption and third lunch accommodates PE and music courses. After these are scheduled, other courses are scheduled by department/area of building as best as possible. The primary force behind lunch scheduling is to ensure that all three lunches are relatively balanced.

When the weather's nice, seniors are able to eat lunch in the courtyard as a privilege. All students have the ability to wait in the courtyard after lunch is completed. Typically some students gather in B lobby at the front of school (adjacent to the cafeteria) when they are done eating lunch. Lunches are not grade based as all three lunches contain students from grades 9-12.

Wahconah has two different lunch lines available to students. The primary lunch line serves the announced lunch for the day. The secondary lunch line serves staples such as pizza, bagels, soft pretzels, salads and assorted frozen goods. Seating is currently a "mess hall" style.

In the future Wahconah would like to keep its three lunch system and move to a single scramble/food court style service. This will allow students to have more choice and quicker access to lunch while having a more collegial dining experience. Part of that dining experience is a preference to offer a variety of seating options including round tables and chairs that promote social interaction as opposed to the institutional "mess hall" tables we have now. It is preferred that a centralized staff dining area be placed adjacent to the kitchen so that staff can dine and converse with one another during lunch.

I. Technology Policies/Program Requirements

Wahconah's technology resources have expanded over the last several years. The building has a wired infrastructure that provides gigabit speeds to all access ports. In addition, there is a wireless infrastructure operating on the AC standard that is currently sufficient for both coverage and client density. However, the construction of the current building presents obstacles for adding new wired infrastructure and for creating a low-interference wireless environment. Wahconah has five computer labs:

- two business/emerging technology labs which serve as active classrooms
 - One in Rm. B5 for Robotics/Accounting
 - One in Rm D1 for Video Game Design/Comp. Programming/Web Design
- a music technology lab which serves as an active classroom
- a computer aided design lab which serves as an active classroom
- a lab that is available to all classroom teachers
 - Rm. D4 which teachers sign up for via Google Calendar

There are also fifteen desktops and twenty-five laptops available for student use in the school's library. Most of the 15 desktops are reserved for those students taking VHS courses in the library. In addition, Wahconah has eight Chromebook carts shared between all classrooms. Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, the budget will support a 1:1 program using Chromebooks for grades 9-12.

The infrastructure of the current building (switches and access points) was purchased within the past two years, and the district's current core network infrastructure is located at Nessacus Regional Middle School as it has power, climate, and space appropriate for a datacenter. Wahconah is connected to the network core at 10 GBps via district-owned fiber optic cable, and shares a 500 MBps fiber internet connection with the rest of the district. The desktops, laptops, and Chromebooks at Wahconah are typically between 1 and 4 years old, however some older devices exist in areas where utilization and hardware requirements are lower. All classrooms have mounted LCD projectors. Some are ceiling mounted and are not interactive, but the majority are interactive wall mounted projectors of a short or ultra short throw design. There are also five 3D printers in the building along with a laser engraver, 3D scanner, and CNC machine.

The current Wahconah library has started to transition to a multi-use space for students to complete class assignments, access Virtual High School, and work on projects collaboratively. In addition to the computers, the current librarian has added a green screen and many large work tables to better accommodate a 21st century learning environment. Her vision is to have a full makerspace available to students, but funding and space restrictions have limited growth in this area. Wahconah has a variety of

computer application, programming, and maintenance courses. In addition, there is a robotics program that competes with other high schools at state competitions and a video club that works closely with Dalton's Community TV Association. The school supports internship opportunities with outside employers as well as with the district's own IT Department.

Moving forward, Wahconah will have a decreased need for separate, dedicated computer labs. However, in some areas where additional or more powerful hardware is required they may still be appropriate (CAD, Video Editing/Production, Music Technology, Business/Emerging Technology). A library/media center space should incorporate makerspace components to effectively allow students to work on class projects and engage in independent learning experiences. A robust wired and wireless infrastructure should be maintained that integrates with the infrastructure in the district's other five buildings, hopefully with enough wifi and bandwidth for 3 devices per person.

J. Visual Art Programs

Wahconah offers students the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge in the visual arts. All arts courses incorporate inquiry, creative and practical problem solving, and higher-order thinking skills. Student work is regularly showcased around Berkshire County including annual shows at the Norman Rockwell Museum and local establishments. Student work is also displayed on bulletin boards and in display cases at school. Our art program is noted for the murals that have been painted on the walls of each hallway. Each year for the past 10 years, our Art Major class has adopted a portion of a hallway to paint a mural. Art courses offered include:

General Art I
General Art II
Painting and Design
Art Major
Drawing

Due to high demand, our art courses are frequently run at max capacity (17 seats) and often have a waiting list. Due to space limitation, our drawing classes are conducted in a World Languages classroom because that room happens to have additional storage space for supplies. Current art staffing includes a full time art teacher and an additional teacher who teaches drawing .4 of the time at Wahconah and the remainder of the time at Nessacus Regional Middle School.

There is significant demand for visual art offerings at Wahconah beyond what we can currently accommodate. In order to meet that demand, Wahconah needs two art rooms. An additional art room would allow for an expanded set of course offerings that could include pottery or sculpture. It would also allow for more students to take more art courses in general. This program has potential for significant growth if we had proper space.

K. Performing Arts Programs

Wahconah offers students the opportunity to develop their talents in the performing arts both during and after the school day. Our performing arts program has three subsets: instrumental music, vocal music, and drama. The following are the instrumental and vocal music courses we currently offer:

Band
Mixed Chorus
Treble Chorus
Music Production

Beginner Guitar
Advanced Guitar
Guitar Ensemble
Intro to Music Theory
AP Music Theory

Due to space limitations, enrollment in Music Production must be limited to 8 students. We currently do not have a dedicated vocal music classroom, therefore our two vocal music classes are conducted in the auditorium during the afternoon. Vocal music is sometimes displaced due to usage demands on the auditorium. There are two dedicated practice spaces for students, however they double as storage rooms. Current music staffing includes a full time instrumental music teacher at Wahconah and an additional .5 vocal music teacher.

Wahconah also has a highly successful extracurricular drama program called the Apollonian Players. A director, assistant director, and musical director are stipended to oversee this program. Approximately 45 students take part in this program. Drama makes frequent use of the auditorium after school, on weekends, and through the summer. While space is frequently used for rehearsals, the auditorium is also used for extensive work on set design and construction. There is currently no dedicated space for that type of work. Drama shares this space with our music department. Therefore, in preparation for concerts (which occur upwards of 4 times per year), drama must seek out alternative spaces for rehearsal such as the cafeteria.

Vocal/Instrumental Music

Wahconah needs more suitable and appropriate educational spaces for the Fine and Performing Arts Programs. The choral music program needs its own dedicated space which should be flexible enough to allow for small drama rehearsals and productions. The instrumental music program needs a dedicated room for Band and Guitar classes. The performing arts courses also need a dedicated multipurpose classroom space with desktop computers to accommodate Music Production classes as well as Music Theory and AP Music Theory. Music needs more space for instrument and uniform storage as well as dedicated practice rooms for students.

Drama

The drama department needs storage for sets and costumes and a place for construction and storage of sets. In addition, an alternative rehearsal space is needed for when the stage is unavailable which could occur in the multipurpose chorus room. The performing arts space needs to be flexible enough to also function as temporary dressing rooms for cast members.

Auditorium

The auditorium at Wahconah is one of the more sought after spaces in the building. It is in high demand for both school and community events. Therefore, the auditorium needs to be handicap accessible both on stage and in the seating area. It needs to have a functional projector with accompanying screen. There needs to be enough wing space in the backstage area for the movement of set pieces, etc. There also needs to be a fully functional sound and lighting system which is controlled by a sound/light control booth. The Wahconah auditorium needs to have at least 550 seats to be able to accommodate seating for both staff and students. The auditorium is used for more traditional performances for our music and drama programs which are usually well attended. The auditorium also experiences frequent community use. Most importantly, it is the primary gathering space for many all-school assemblies. All-school assemblies are an integral part of our school culture at Wahconah and we intend to use this space frequently moving forward.

Physical Education Programs

The mission of the Wahconah Physical Wellness Department is to engage students in a variety of activities that promote lifelong physical and emotional well-being so students will improve their mind, body and spirit. Students are required to take one full semester of Physical Wellness per year. Physical Wellness classes will meet 6 out of 7 days per cycle starting in the fall of 2018. Students may take additional courses if desired. Next year's course selections include:

PE/Health (Gr. 9 only)
General Physical Education (Gr. 10-12)
Lifetime PE (Gr. 10-12)
Yoga/Stress Management (Gr. 10-12)
Personal Wellness (Gr. 10-12)

Students have choice to participate in a variety of team sports, individual sports, and personal fitness activities. Through a variety of activities each and every student can develop practical, academic and interpersonal skills as well as improve their quality of life through physical activity. Each student will have different needs and skill levels yet they need to learn to respect not only their own, but also the strengths and weaknesses of their peers. A classroom-based health component is embedded into the grade 9 physical wellness experience. This component focuses on making positive life choices, interpersonal skills, mental/social health, nutrition, substance abuse education, as well as community health and safety.

The primary teaching space for Physical Wellness is the gymnasium and the athletic fields (weather permitting). Due to space limitations, our health classes are taught in a small classroom in the general education area. Many activities including yoga and other personal wellness activities are conducted in the hallway. There is no dedicated fitness or weight lifting room in the school. Storage has also been identified as an ongoing issue.

Finally, our existing locker rooms are in dire need of attention. The physical conditions need repair and the configuration does not support our current functions. We have two separate team locker rooms and two larger PE locker rooms. The girls locker room does not have access to the outdoors and lacks proper ventilation.

Wahconah needs a full sized gym that contains one main court as well as two secondary courts running in the opposite direction. Physical Wellness also needs a secondary space that is dedicated to the lifetime fitness aspects of its program. This auxiliary multipurpose space is needed to accommodate weight training and have enough open space that it can be used for yoga and other fitness activities. Over 50% of our student population takes part in our athletic program, therefore locker rooms need to be large enough to accommodate both physical wellness and our vibrant athletic program. In addition to traditional bathroom facilities, we also need to accommodate our students with gender neutral bathrooms and changing areas in the locker room area. An office for the Athletic Director should be located near in the Physical Wellness area as well.

L. Special Education Programs

Wahconah Regional High School has a primarily full inclusion model with students participating in all content area classes in the general education setting through a co-teaching model. The students take their core courses in general education and receive special education services outside of the general education classroom primarily in reading instruction, academic support and other related services in groups of 8-12. For a smaller group of students there are content classes taught in a special education setting as described below.

An Academic Assistance period is provided to those students whose IEP calls for such services. Academic Assistance is offered every day or every other day depending on student need. Academic Assistance provides ongoing support and reinforcement of skills acquired in general education classes. Students are supported in meeting their IEP goals and achieve a higher level of academic independence as well. This class is graded and credited.

Co-Teaching is the primary method of service delivery for students with disabilities. Co-Teachers work primarily in math, English Language Arts and Science. During the co-taught course, the special education teacher pushes into the classroom of the general education teacher and those teachers work together to modify the curriculum and accommodate the students as needed.

Practical, hands-on, content-driven courses rooted in the curriculum frameworks are available for those students who plan on participating in the MCAS Alternate Portfolio assessment. Specifically, courses in math, language arts, reading, and other areas are offered to these students on an as-needed basis and are both graded and credit-bearing.

Those students whose IEP service delivery grids call for interventions such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech receive pull out services from a district-based specialist. Those services are provided within the school in one specific room dedicated for such services.

Wahconah has a small English Language Learner population. Those students receive services two hours per day and they are delivered in a multi-purpose room which also serves as a teacher lunch room and team meeting room.

The Janus program is an “at-risk” educational platform unique to Wahconah. It is designed to provide alternative educational programming for students who are at risk of dropping out of high school and/or are in need of alternative instructional delivery. The primary delivery of instruction is through the APEX online learning system. The number of participating students is relatively small and is facilitated by our school Librarian.

Within the last year, our school has made an effort to increase its academic interventions for those students who need it while preparing to take the MCAS. We currently offer an MCAS Math Blast course every other day to those students identified as needing math intervention in the 10th grade. Next year we will be adding an MCAS Bio Blast class for incoming 9th grade students who are identified in a similar way.

The Central Berkshire Regional School District services the vast majority of students within the district with a wide range of supports and services. The historical average of the percentage of students with Individual Education Programs in the district has been 14%. The historical average of students with Individualized Education Programs serviced outside of the district is 3-5%. The students who are educated outside of the district for special education programming for which the district pays tuition are primarily students in the 18-22 age range for whom the district contracts with the Pittsfield Public Schools for a Transition Program. There are also students in grades K-8 who are tuitioned into private special education programs due to the severity and complexity of their special education needs.

Each academic pod will have an Academic Support Center/Resource room. These spaces would be seminar style rooms for 12-15 students with flexible seating. Speech and ELL services could also be delivered in these rooms. It would be ideal for each pod to have a small quiet space for those students who experience sensory issues to have a place to decompress and recalibrate.

One additional space is needed for a comprehensive special education classroom for students with significant disabilities. This classroom will require handicap accessible bathrooms, small model “apartment” set up for life skills training with a functional kitchen and a separate space for academic instruction with flexible seating. This space would also be located in a pod ideally near an exit from the building for ease of access during the day for work-based opportunities. In addition to serving this purpose, this space could also be used by Physical Wellness staff to teach a nutrition course.

Occupational and Physical Therapy need a space with a motor/sensory room set up including gross motor equipment as well as two small break out rooms for small group and 1:1 support. These rooms could be located near the Physical Wellness area or have their own dedicated room in the academic zone. This room should be a flexible space with moveable walls or screens to allow for use of the whole space and, when needed, be broken into smaller spaces for 1:1 support.

M. Counseling/Health Services

Wahconah has a dedicated space for Guidance counseling. The Guidance suite consists of three individual offices for each of our guidance counselors. It also contains a small walk-through office housing an administrative assistant. Two other spaces include a common “middle room” which contains college and career readiness materials and a small conference room which is frequently used for SST/IEP team meetings.

Our school has one full-time nurse on staff who is housed in a nurse’s suite. Her suite consists of a small waiting room which contains seats along the wall for students waiting to see her. Additionally there are two sick beds located within the waiting room with curtains for limited privacy purposes. The remainder of the nurse’s suite consists of an office, galley, two small exam rooms and a small bathroom that is not handicap accessible. The overarching concern for the nurse’s suite is the difficulty in maintaining privacy and proper supervision.

Our school shares a psychologist with Nessacus Regional Middle School. She is on site 2-3 days per week providing consult services, working 1:1 with students, and conducting testing. Her office is located within the nurse’s suite in a small back room.

We have one full-time School Adjustment Counselor (SAC). Her office is embedded within the general education area toward the center of the school. Her office consists of two spaces. The front space is considered to be a “quiet room” for those students who need to drop in and compose themselves in order to move on with their day. The backspace is her actual office which has room for 1:1 and small group counseling as needed. There are significant concerns about privacy given her current location due to its proximity to general education classrooms and lack of soundproofing.

Wahconah needs a full “Student Support Center”. This portion of the school should contain the following:

- A new guidance suite needs an improved layout to better accommodate small group meetings and maintain privacy and confidentiality. Ideally it should be located as close to the student population as possible while still having enough proximity to the administrative portion of the building.
- There must also be a space for the School Adjustment Counselor and School Psychologist as well as a space for the Guidance Administrative Assistant.
- A conference room, a room for college and career readiness, and spaces that maintain student privacy and confidentiality are also extremely important. Those spaces should include a “drop in” room for those students who need several minutes to collect themselves and decompress before moving on with their day.

- An Assistant Principal's office will be adjacent to or in close proximity to the counseling offices. The Asst. Principal will require an office and an adjacent room(s) for private conversations, small group meetings, tutoring, in-school suspension, and positive behavioral support sessions. The office should also contain a small waiting area for students. Overall, placing our counseling offices near the Asst. Principal's office represents our intent to make this space Wahconah's "Student Support Center".

A separate Health Services suite will house our school nurse. It needs to be arranged for the nurse to have proper supervision. It must contain a waiting area and office as well as exam areas that are conducive to maximum privacy and confidentiality.

N. Vocation and Technology Programs

Even though there are no Ch. 74 programs at Wahconah, hands-on learning is an important part of many students' academic experiences. Our school seeks to foster a comprehensive academic experience for all students which is why we continue to offer a number of CTE courses. One of the approaches we use to enhance students' learning experiences is through CVTE Linkage. The goal of this program is to "link" high school career and technical programs with related programs at Berkshire Community College (BCC) and other local colleges. This is made possible in two ways:

- **Articulated Courses:** Students who successfully complete certain courses at Wahconah and subsequently matriculate to BCC can apply for BCC credit. These classes include Anatomy & Physiology, Honors Environmental Science, and Accounting I. Next year we are looking to add Personal Money Management, Computer Programming, and Accounting II.
- **Dual Enrollment Courses:** Students who test college ready on the college assessment and meet all course prerequisites, complete required registration and Bridge to College forms, and earn a qualifying grade in a Wahconah course can get a BCC transcript for that course, which will be accepted at BCC and may be accepted at other colleges. These classes include Anatomy & Physiology and Honors Environmental Science. Next year we are looking to add Personal Money Management, Computer Programming, and Accounting II.

We have two staff members at Wahconah who are dedicated full time to teaching the following courses:

- Principles of Engineering I
- Principles of Engineering II
- Elective Drafting
- *Construction Tech
- *CAD & 3D Printing
- *Automotive Lab

*This course offers students the opportunity to take the course at an advanced level for credit. The teacher differentiates their instruction as both advanced and non-advanced students attend the same class at the same time.

There are an additional two staff members dedicated to teaching the following courses:

- Computer Graphics and Web Design
- Computer Software Applications
- Cyber Literacy in the Digital Age
- Robotics
- Video Game Design
- Computer Building and Repair
- *Computer Programming

*This course offers students the opportunity to take the course at an advanced level for credit. The teacher differentiates their instruction as both advanced and non-advanced students attend the same class at the same time.

The remainder of the teaching time for those two staff members is spent teaching:

- Accounting I
- Accounting II/III
- Entrepreneurship
- Personal Money Management
- Sports & Entertainment Marketing

One staff member who primarily teaches math is given an extra block in her school day to supervise our school's Work Study/Internship program. This program is designed in cooperation with the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board and local employers to provide both college and career connecting opportunities for juniors and seniors along with opportunities for skill development and direct application. The Work Study/Internship Program offers students the opportunity to earn credit for work-related experiences as both paid and unpaid internships. Students who take advantage of the program will receive individualized vocational skills training, as well as instruction in the many facets of their chosen occupational area and establish good employer references. The program is offered in various formats, which range from half day school/half day work, to other in-school, after school, evening, and summer options.

Based upon the visioning session and the intent to have academic pods, it would be ideal to have CTE spaces integrated into or in proximity to the general classrooms. If each pod had a makerspace/engineering/tech space it could be used part time to house the scheduled programs listed above, as well as be utilized by the small learning communities for project based learning. Each learning community's CTE classroom could have a clean space for computers and project design, and a separate construction/project space. In each pod the CTE room could have a slightly different purpose. For example, one CTE room might be designed for small engine repair, one might designed for woodworking, one might be designed for engineering and robotics, and another might be designed for CAD and 3D printing. Most Business classes can be scheduled into general education classrooms. Some business classes may need additional technology support/hardware depending on the curriculum.

There is still a student demand for hands-on learning but there is also the reality that we will not be able to build a full auto lab for our students. Therefore, a movement toward a more dynamic small engine repair course is something that would appeal to many students and fit with the overall educational plan for our school.

O. Chapter 74 Programming

Wahconah does not offer any Chapter 74 programming. District students who wish to participate in Chapter 74 programs attend McCann Tech in North Adams, Smith Vocational/Agricultural in Northampton or Taconic in Pittsfield.

P. Transportation Policies

Presently, students take the bus, drive, are driven to school or walk. Given that we are a 7 town regional school district which encompasses 235 square miles, bus transportation is provided. Geographically, our school district is the largest in the state. Towns that are part of the district are: Becket, Dalton, Cummington, Hinsdale, Peru Windsor, Washington. Students from as many as nine additional

communities choice into our school as well. As many as 14 buses transport our students to and from school. Transportation is provided to school choice students if:

- The parent/guardian can get the choice student to the nearest CBRSD bus stop.
- The bus on that route has room for a choice student(s).

Recently the number of choice students has been approximately 70 on average each year for the last three years.

For after school activities, students drive themselves, get a ride from a parent or take one of 3 “late buses” that transport students at 3:30pm.

Currently, the main parking lot accommodates 250 cars. There is a smaller 30-space teacher lot as well. visitor/staff parking out front. There is not a dedicated driveway for student drop/off and pick-up.

Moving forward, the driveways and parking lots need to be better designed for safety and must include separate traffic patterns for buses and cars. The parking area must also be able to accommodate the numerous athletic and community functions that occur at our school on a regular basis.

Q. Function and Spatial Relationships

Ideally our school would be divided into two sections: A public zone and an academic zone.

Public Zone

The public zone will include the gymnasium, auditorium, music/chorus spaces, and a flexible cafeteria that functions as a lobby for both the auditorium and gymnasium. The high activity areas (cafeteria/kitchen, auditorium, gymnasium) should be accessible after school hours and operational without having access to other areas in the building. They should also be convenient and accessible for community use. The gym and locker rooms should have direct access to the outdoors and reasonable proximity to the fields.

Academic Zone

The academic zone would contain the academic classrooms, the media center/learning commons, and other specialists. Most of the academic classrooms would be organized into pods to promote flexibility of student learning experiences. Each pod will contain breakout spaces for small group collaboration and project based learning as well as teacher planning space. Each planning room would contain small inner offices to accommodate 2 department chairs per pod. Also included in (or near) each pod would be a special education/academic support room.

Learning Commons

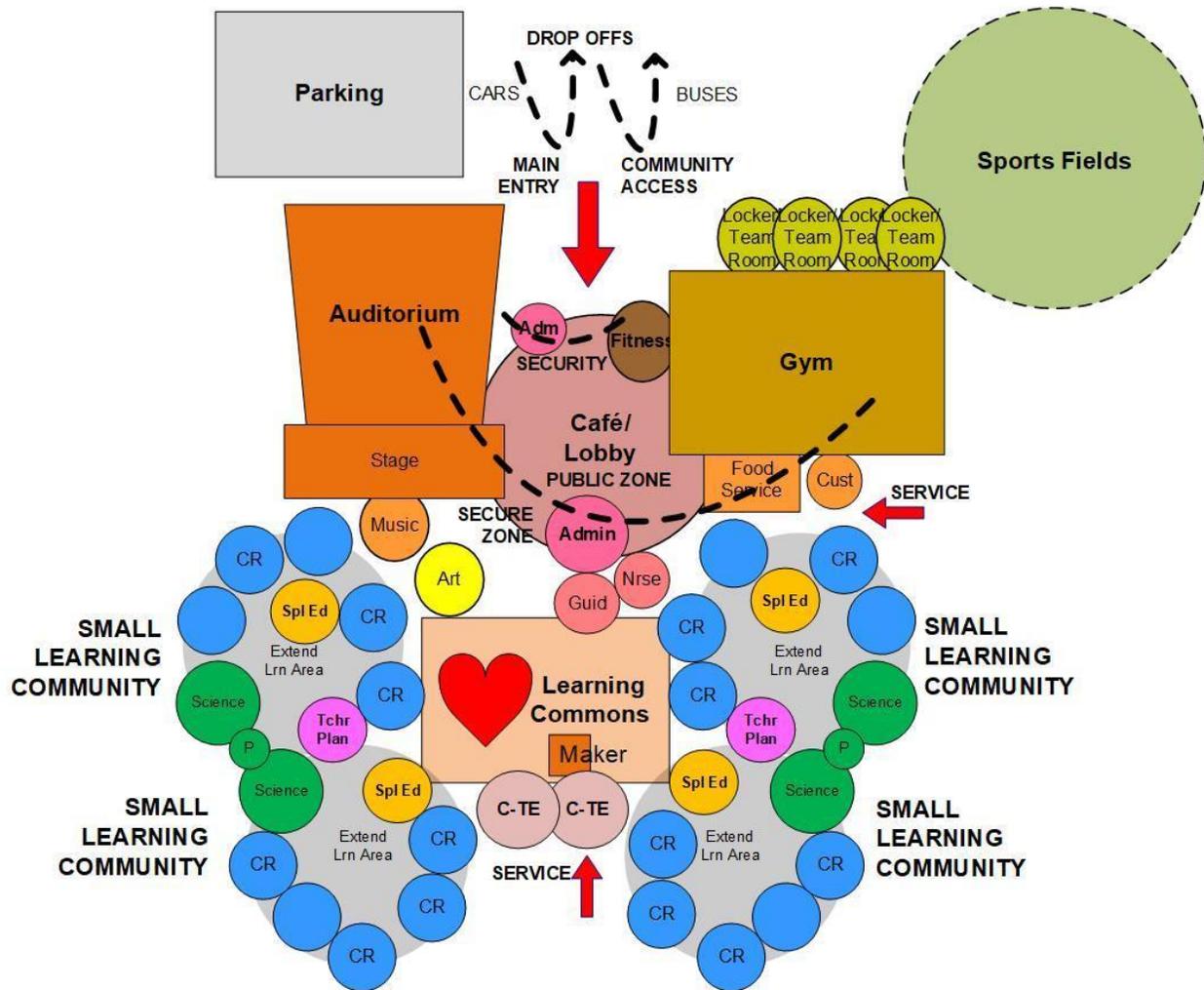
The Learning Commons will serve as the academic heart of the school. This space potentially could be double-height and located between academic pods. This should be a flexible space with a variety of flexible furniture within it. Multiple movable glass partitions within and around the Learning Commons would enable smaller spaces for meetings and other events to be held within the Learning Commons while still allowing for sufficient supervision. Maker spaces would be located adjacent to the Learning Commons. Several small group collaboration and/or individual study rooms would also be incorporated into the Learning Commons space.

Offices

Administration offices will serve as the “gateway” between the public and academic zones and will be situated in such a way to monitor and control access to the building. The administration suite needs to contain an office for the Principal and space for a front office administrative assistant and the

administrative assistant to the Principal. It should also contain a waiting area near the front office administrative assistant's station and a conference room near the Principal's office. The Assistant Principal's office should be adjacent to or part of the the Guidance Suite to create a physical layout that maximizes collaboration with student support services. The Assistant Principal should have his own office along with an room(s) for private conversations and meetings. The health office and guidance suite would sit on the border between the public and academic zone adjacent to the Assistant Principal's office. In sum, the Asst. Principal's office in addition to Guidance, SAC, Psych will serve as Wahconah's centralized "Student Support Center".

The concept diagram below was created during the visioning process guided by Dr. Frank Locker:



WAHCONAH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
 RELATIONSHIP DIAGRRAM
 Number of classrooms not determined

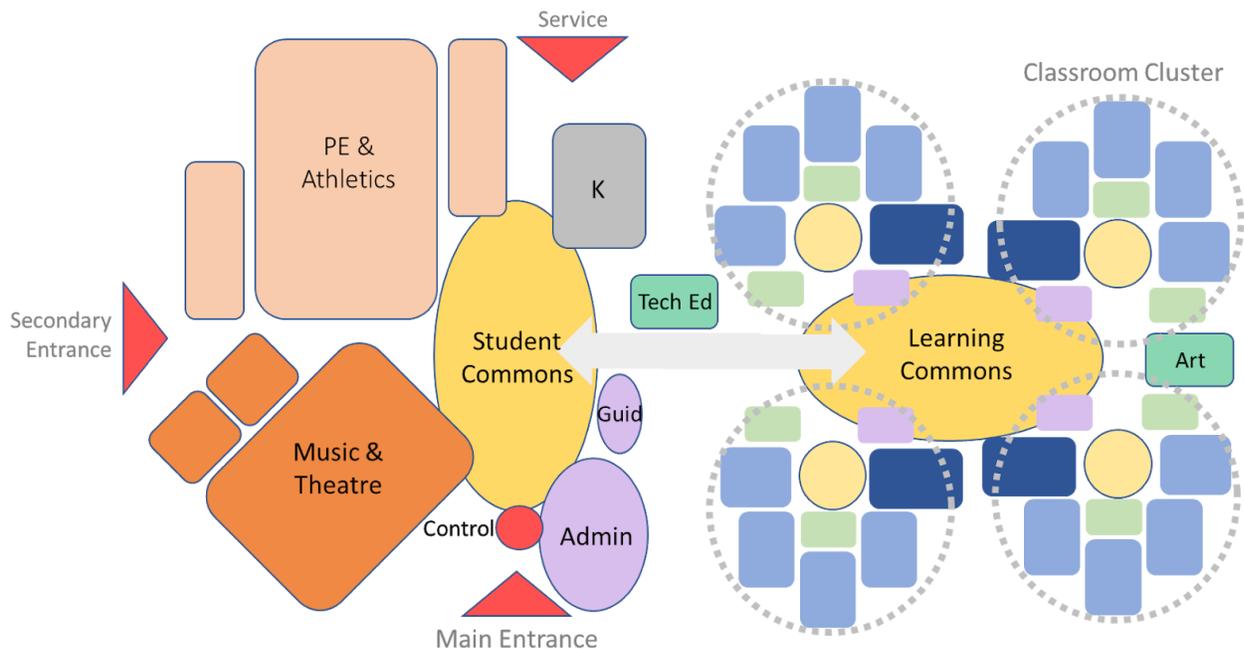
R. Key Programmatic Adjacencies

Programmatic adjacencies need to improve flexibility, collaborative learning, and promote varied learning experiences.

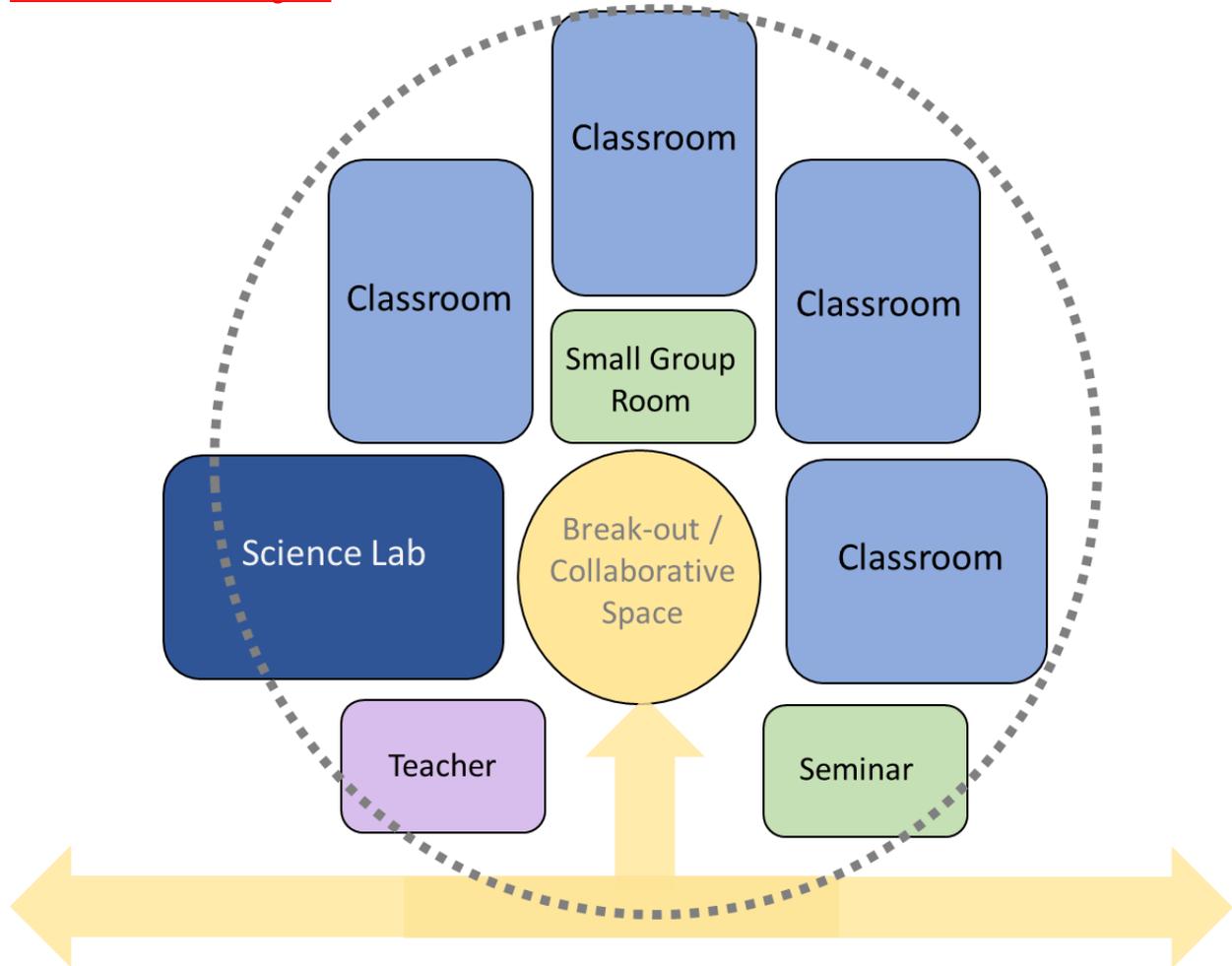
- Administration - needs to be located to monitor the main entrance while acting as a bridge between the public and academic zones.
- Guidance Counseling/Psychologist/Health Services - needs to be located in proximity to the administrative offices and the academic zone.
- Special Education - Academic Support classrooms need to be integrated within (or at the very least in close proximity to) the classroom pods. These resource rooms can be the size of a seminar room and can also accommodate Speech and ELL services. One dedicated “life skills” classroom should be located on the ground floor and divided into two sections: one section to practice adult living skills and another section to be used as a classroom space.
- Occupational/Physical therapy - These rooms could be located near the Physical Wellness area or have their own dedicated room in the academic zone. This room should be a flexible space with moveable walls or screens to allow for use of the whole space and, when needed, be broken into smaller spaces for 1:1 support.
- PE/ Coaches Office need to be located in proximity to the gym in the public zone.
- Athletic Director’s office should be located in proximity to the gym and in the public zone.
- Gym/Fitness/Locker Space needs to be located for easy access by the public. A functional relationship needs to exist so that the spaces can be easily monitored.
- Media Center/Learning Commons should be centrally located between the academic pods.
- CTE spaces should be part of or in close proximity to the academic pods.
- Science classrooms should be adjacent to share prep and storage spaces and be located within or adjacent to the academic pods.
- Performing Arts spaces (music and chorus) should be clustered together near the auditorium.
- Cafeteria should be centrally located between the auditorium and gymnasium to serve as a lobby for both areas.

An updated Adjacencies Diagram has been produced by the Design Team in collaboration with Wahconah’s Building Committee:

Overall School Diagram



Classroom Cluster Diagram



S. Security and Visual Access Requirements

Wahconah currently has a security camera system with 40 cameras. However, most of the current cameras are older analog units with poor video quality. All cameras record to an ExacqVision server and while retention depends on how much motion activity is recorded, it is currently approximately three weeks. This system can be accessed by school and district administrators via desktops, laptops, or mobile devices. A system such as this one should be maintained with HD IP Cameras.

Wahconah's current door access system consists of readers at two exterior doors that interface with a central control unit. Staff are distributed RFID ID cards that will open these doors. Wahconah also has readers at other exterior doors, however these are independent, rely on batteries, and are not used due to the complexity of managing them. An RFID system should be maintained with readers on as many exterior doors as possible so as to minimize the need to distribute exterior door keys.

The main entrance should contain a vestibule and be designed in such a way that parents dropping off items for students do not need to enter the main building (ex. “mantrap”). It should have a passthrough similar to a drive through bank teller and reinforced glass window. This vestibule near the office will require an administrative assistant to allow the guest into the building would be ideal. A waiting area should be also incorporated into that vestibule.

The community spaces (gymnasium, main offices, auditorium and cafeteria) should be separate from the academic areas to limit access off hours and to act as an additional security point. Additional cameras need to be installed for both interior and exterior monitoring. It’s expected that we will continue with some sort of RFID system for security purposes.

APPENDIX

Visioning Report

Wahconah HS Master Class Schedule