**Notes from 9/26th Site Council meeting**

It was decided to focus the meeting on four of the main 5 planned sections of the Multi-year Plan on Infrastructure, Instruction, Program Development, and Extracurricular Activities.

Breakout groups: Kevin and Paul- Infrastructure; Jessica and Dave- Instruction; Brian and Curtis –Program Development; and Barry, Griffin and Dale- Extracurricular Activities.

Transportation: Having quick decisions on transportation available to parents/students will be important for them to make decisions to not only decide to attend Benson but to stay at Benson. Effective communications of that critical. Good transportation after hours also important for sports and other after school activities. Even once at Marshall we probably will need to continue to assess/monitor safe sidewalks and pathways between Marshall HS and bus stops due to construction in the area.

Continuing a strong Tech Show while at Marshall will be an important part of maintaining Benson Tech’s identity……………… consideration should be given to displaying Benson’s Core Class aspects as well as CTE. *[In the 1950’s, at least the, all of Benson’s classrooms were open with teachers there to greet visitors and returning alumni.]*

Despite smaller and perhaps less well equipped CTE space it might be a good time to experiment/ start new TECH SHOW features, eg display of ‘required’ senior projects that may require/involve an application of one or more ‘core class’ ideas.

Equipment: Need a good inventory with input of equipment to keep, take, and discard. Need good secure storage to that kept but not taken. Need to start soon to develop and/or strengthen partners who might be a source of equipment and technology to use at Marshall (especially for evolving CTE programs) and for the modernized Benson. Strong teacher involvement is the foregoing is important.

CTE at Marshall: Due to the space the CTE programs are likely to be ‘smaller’ and ‘more compact’, While they maybe similar, program content and focus of each CTE will need to change to match technology changes and needs in the workplace – should not wait until a move back to the new building, That should include exploring and implementing some new multi-disciplinary courses however difficult they are to develop.

We should be embracing the move to/time at Marshall to “do things differently” !!

Football A concerted effort should be made to have at least a JV football team when Benson “opens at Marshall” --- good for Benson’s identity.

Maybe Benson should focus, at least until Benson’s enrollment approaches 1700 students, on JV Football and it providing a “fun experience”. Over next 4-5 years steer away from the “pressure” of getting back to a Varsity team. Hire and guide coaches to that approach.

**Increasing enrollment**. PPS should be approached re gradually raising Benson’s enrollment beyond the current 1000 students while Benson is at Marshall to allow expanding CTE programs as well as developing new multi-disciplinary paths (this would be dependent upon staff increases). And, not wait until Benson returns to a modernized building. A gradual increase would also facilitate an orderly acquisition of staff. It was pointed out PPS decision to hold Benson’s enrollment at 1000 was based on Jerry Vincent’s (now gone) belief and advice to BOE that Benson could not handle more than 1000 if it stayed on site during modernization. Staying on site is no longer the plan for modernization.

Allowing some gradual increase in Benson’s enrollment might also alleviate current “crowding” at several neighborhood HS’s…… and that PPS had some reasonable options in the enrollment process to distribute opening at Benson to avoid hurting enrollment at those schools with smaller enrollment.

It was also observed that if the Site Council wanted to go on record – include an Action Item -- in its Multi-year Plan one or more of the non-PPS employed members (as well as the Alumni Association) would be willing to explore that proposal with senior PPS staff and testify before the BOE….. with the understanding that both efforts would require careful and thoughtful rationale (not simply emotions)

Several teachers pointed out that there is teacher interest in exploring, and demonstrating/testing new/different ideas in teaching CTE, eg. blending current disciplines, integrating CTE and core curriculum that are consistent with PPS interest in doing so. The Site Council should recognize that and include in its plan Benson’s own initiate to explore some options in the next year or two to do exactly that. Be proactive. At least quickly embrace PPS thinking and have Benson be the demonstration school.

*[Moving quickly will bring Benson’s classes in line with quickly moving technology changes in industry, eg Amazon is ordering 100,000 electric delivery vans with the first going into service in 2021. With cheap electricity and high price gas, Seattle and Portland are likely to be early place for their roll-out. Amazon is intending to be 100% on renewal able energy by 2030. Also Walgreens will begin testing yet this year the use of drones in Christianberg VA (10 miles from Virginia Tech) to deliver virtually anything in their drugstore except prescriptions.]*

*[Like robots, drones involve a real blend of Benson’s existing CTE programs. In the short run (the next 2 years) perhaps Benson should PLAN to start an extracurricular Drones Club similar to the long existing Robotics Club. Might be a way to put, via the M-Y Plan, as a direction it is taking.]*

[The breakout group on Extracurricular activities discussed a number of items of which only football got discussed in the meeting. Barry has notes including thoughts of increasing rapport between students and teacher/staff involving sporting events and ‘knowledge contests’ as well as some other topics.]

The meeting concluded with a tentative decision to resume ‘brainstorming’ the same 4 sections of the Multi-year Plan going deeper into the topics/issues already raised and broadening the scope.

*[Hopefully focusing some of the thoughts into specific ‘Action Items’ that can be entered as draft entries in the Plan.]*