

# **SWANSEA PUBLIC SCHOOLS JOSEPH CASE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

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## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS PREFERRED SCHEMATIC REPORT SUBMISSION**

**PREPARED FOR MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY**

***OCTOBER 2025-Amended December 2025***

*ORIGINAL / JANUARY 2025  
UPDATED / MAY 2025  
REVISED / OCTOBER 2025  
AMENDED / DECEMBER 2025*

# SWANSEA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## JOSEPH CASE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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### MODULE 3: FEASIBILITY STUDY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS PREFERRED SCHEMATIC REPORT

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## **Introduction:**

### **Mission:**

To provide opportunities and pathways in a safe, supportive and technology-rich environment that engage, challenge, and inspire students to achieve college and career readiness and to contribute to our 21st century community.

### **Vision:**

Public education in Swansea is a collaborative effort among staff, faculty, students, parents, and the community; we seek to challenge, inspire, and bring the joy of learning to all students. Guided by our Core Values, we will provide all students opportunities to become lifelong learners who excel academically, socially, and personally. Our goal is to empower students to contribute actively to the civic, moral, and economic spirit of our diverse democratic community and society.

### **Core Values:**

- Sharing communication among all stakeholders
- Working collaboratively with the community
- Authentic learning opportunities
- Nurturing, safe educational environments
- Strengthening higher order thinking skills
- Engaging students as active learners
- Accountability in academic excellence and integrity

Swansea was established on October 30, 1667, when Pastor John Myles, Captain Thomas Willett and their neighbors petitioned the Court at Plymouth to establish a town. The fourth town founded in Bristol County, Swansea originally extended from the boundaries of Taunton and Rehoboth to Mount Hope Bay. The area was reduced three times, first by the incorporation of Barrington as a town in 1717, then by the annexation of Warren by the state of Rhode Island in 1747, and finally by the incorporation of Somerset as a separate town in 1790. The first state census taken in 1765 showed Swansea's population to be 1,840. The 2020 Federal Census showed a population of 17,144.

Swansea Public Schools serve the town with four elementary schools, one junior high school, and one senior high school. Gardner School and Mark G. Hoyle School service students in pre-K through the 2nd grade. The Elizabeth S. Brown School and Joseph G. Luther School educate students in grades 3-5. Joseph Case Junior High School provides for students in grades 6-8, with Joseph Case High School educating students in grades 9-12.

Through our school building project, we are committed to improving junior high school education through a multifaceted approach addressing academic, social, emotional, and developmental needs. We intend to accomplish this through:

#### **1. Curriculum and Instruction**

- Personalized Learning: Tailor lessons to different learning styles and levels.
- Hands-On and Project-Based Learning: Engage students with real-world applications.
- Interdisciplinary Curriculum: Integrate subjects to show connections between topics.
- Focus on Critical Thinking: Emphasize problem-solving, analytical skills, and deeper learning.

## 2. Teacher Development

- Professional Training: Provide ongoing training in best practices, classroom management, and technology use.
- Mentorship: Pair new teachers with experienced mentors.
- Encourage Collaboration: Foster team teaching and subject integration.

## 3. Supportive Environment

- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Teach empathy, resilience, and emotional regulation.
- Safe Spaces: Create an inclusive environment where students feel valued and supported.
- Bullying Prevention: Implement effective anti-bullying policies and programs.

## 4. Technology Integration

- EdTech Tools: Use interactive software and platforms for collaboration and personalized instruction.
- Digital Literacy: Teach students how to use technology responsibly and effectively.

## 5. Parental and Community Involvement

- Parent-Teacher Partnerships: Keep parents informed and involved in their child's education.
- Community Engagement: Collaborate with local organizations for resources, mentoring, and extracurricular activities.
- Volunteering Opportunities: Encourage community members to participate in school events and programs.

## 6. Extracurricular Opportunities

- Clubs and Sports: Offer a wide range of activities to cater to diverse interests.
- Arts and Creativity: Provide opportunities for music, drama, and visual arts.
- STEM Programs: Develop specialized programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

## 7. Addressing Individual Needs

- Special Education Services: Ensure students with disabilities receive appropriate support.
- Counseling Services: Provide access to mental health and academic counselors.
- Gifted Programs: Offer enrichment for advanced learners.
- Addressing Individual Needs of All Students: We currently offer enrichment opportunities for all students in math and reading. We strive to offer additional opportunities for higher level work for advanced learners.

## 8. Assessment and Feedback

- Formative Assessments: Use frequent, low-stakes assessments to gauge understanding.
- Student-Centered Feedback: Provide constructive feedback and involve students in goal-setting.
- Reduce Test Focus: Shift from standardized testing to diverse assessment methods.

## 9. Infrastructure and Resources

- Modern Facilities: Ensure classrooms are well-equipped and conducive to learning.
- Access to Materials: Provide textbooks, technology, and lab equipment.
- Funding: Advocate for adequate funding for junior high school programs.

## 10. Policy and Leadership

- Inclusive Policies: Address equity issues, such as disparities in funding or resources.
- Strong Leadership: Empower school leaders to drive innovation and improvement.

- Data-Driven Decision Making: Use data to inform changes and measure progress.

## **Educational Program Members:**

### **Educational Program Members Joseph Case Junior High School MSBA Project**

1. Scott Holcomb - Superintendent of Schools
2. Elizabeth White - Assistant Superintendent of Schools
3. Sean Scanlon - Director of Student Services
4. Robert Silveira - Principal of Joseph Case Junior High School
5. Hollie Martin - Science Teacher
6. Stephanie Sutherland - Science Teacher
7. Cheryl Borges - Math Teacher
8. Laura Pendleton - Math Teacher
9. Barbara Baraby-Ferreira - Math Teacher
10. Dan Wenzel - Social Studies Teacher
11. Wendy Sullivan - English Teacher
12. Melinda Pimentel - Art Teacher
13. Erin McGough-Silvia - School Nurse
14. Monique Grauer - Guidance Counselor/Department Head
15. Lindsey Rapoza - Special Education Coordinator
16. Dr. Tammy Greene - Instructional Technology Director, K-8
17. Richard Cordeiro - Music Director, K-8
18. Rebecca Hall - Art Director, K-12
19. Jeff Hetu - Physical Education/Health Director, K-12
20. Joanne Rebelo - Director of Finance and Operations
21. Leslie Stoltz - Director of Health Services, K-12
22. Kimberley Orr - District Food Services Director
23. Gilbert Pereira - Director of Technology
24. Christopher Coelho - Facilities Manager
25. Dan Horton - Transportation Coordinator

## **1. Grade and School Configuration Policies**

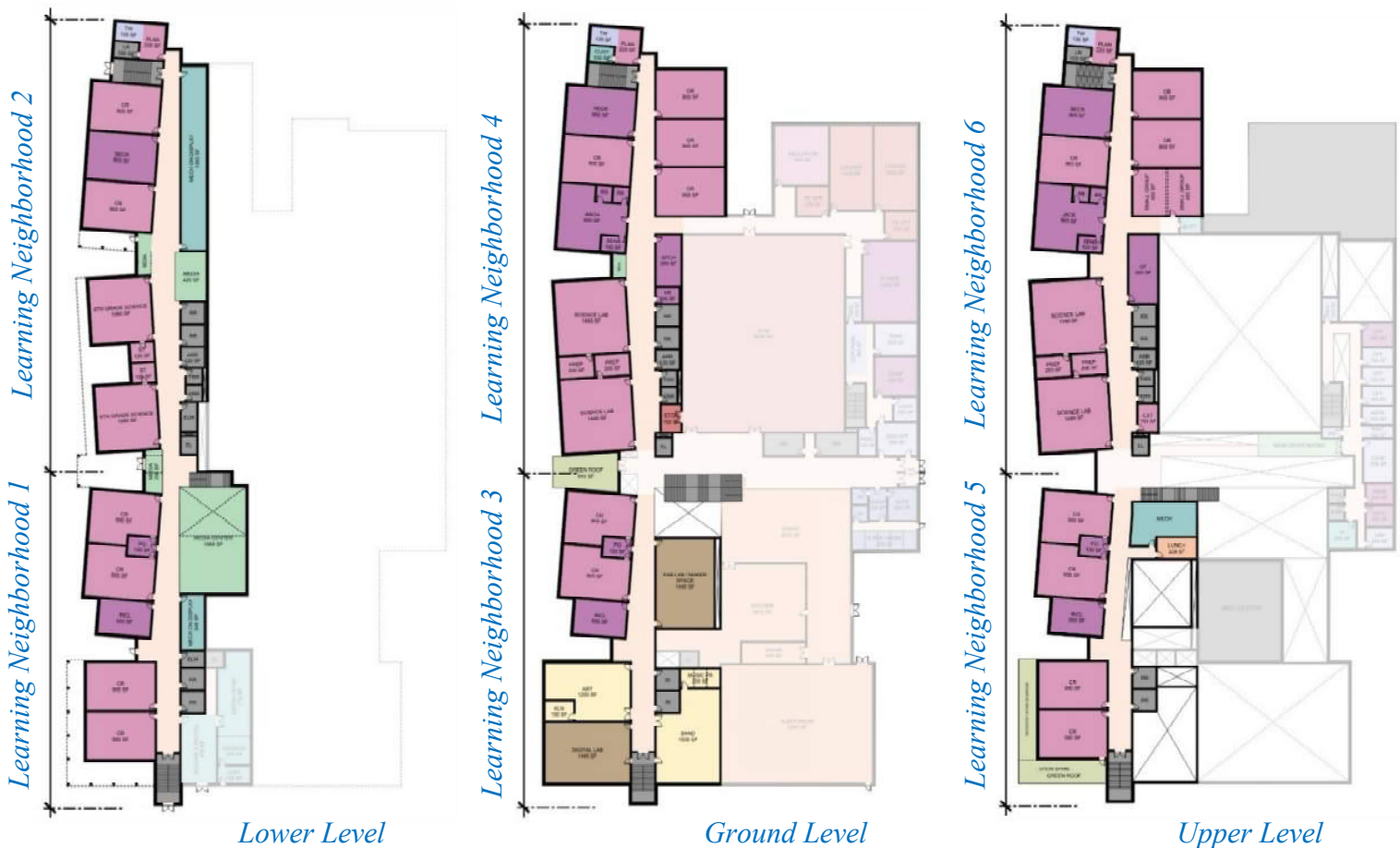
Joseph Case Junior High School is currently configured as a grade 6-8 junior high school serving a total of 497 students. This grade level configuration has been in place since the mid-nineteen seventies. With our emphasis on inclusion, we do not place students in cohorts that travel together throughout the day. Through this model students interact with peers from different backgrounds and abilities, fostering empathy, teamwork, and communication skills. This approach helps students learn to appreciate different approaches and problem-solving strategies. In addition, this model reduces tracking which can perpetuate stereotypes and limit opportunities for some students. It ensures all students have access to high-quality instruction and resources. In our new junior high school building, we intend to stay with this model to encourage students to see learning as a journey, with different starting points and progress rates and help students focus on personal improvement rather than fixed comparisons.

In a traditional middle school, the term cohort means a group of students that travel together to all classes throughout the day. In the junior high school model, groupings are changed throughout the day. While the

cohort model does not preclude inclusion, we feel that the junior high school model allows for scheduling that maximizes the opportunities for students to be grouped heterogeneously and therefore provides greater flexibility to include all students.

To further elaborate on the junior high school model, while we do have advanced math classes in each grade level, we do not group students according to level. The scheduling model that we follow allows the students in these advanced math classes to attend their other classes with students of differing abilities. This is in contrast to middle schools that keep groups of students together throughout the day. We feel that heterogeneously grouped classes offer a range of important benefits for both students and teachers. By bringing together learners with diverse abilities, backgrounds, and perspectives, these classes create a more inclusive learning environment that reflects real-world communities. Students have the opportunity to learn from one another; those who grasp concepts quickly can deepen their understanding by explaining ideas to peers, while those who need more support benefit from peer modeling and collaboration. This structure also helps reduce stigma that can come from rigid tracking systems, ensuring all students have access to high-quality instruction and challenging content. Additionally, heterogeneous grouping encourages teachers to use differentiated strategies, which fosters creativity in lesson design and provides multiple entry points for students at various levels of readiness. Beyond academics, mixed-ability classrooms promote social growth, empathy, and collaboration, helping students build essential life skills in communication, teamwork, and respect for different perspectives.

*Design Response: The preferred solution organizes learning neighborhoods on three floors and within two neighborhoods that flank the central common area. The intent is to provide future flexibility and adaptability to advances in education by providing six (6) learning areas between the three (3) floors. Placing the school on the hill provides lower-level outdoor access. This responds to the above and addresses future configurations.*



## **2. Class Size Policies**

Swansea Public Schools currently has no policy relative to class size. At Joseph Case Junior High School, we have two sections in each of the academic classes in each grade. This means that at any given time, eight classes are operating at our school in each grade, equaling twenty-four sections. Our student numbers have historically been in the five-hundred range. Dividing this by the twenty-four sections, we get an average of 20.8 students per class. This number can fluctuate depending on the size of the grade in any given academic year. We will strive to continue to keep class sizes at this level moving forward.

*Design Response: The preferred solution has 900 NSF (net-square-feet) classrooms to accommodate the MSBA-23 students per class and the approximately 20 students per class that currently exists in Swansea. The intent is for these academic spaces to have ample space for teacher and student storage, and to allow for different furniture types and configurations.*

## **3. School Scheduling Method**

### **Current Scheduling Method**

Joseph Case Junior High School currently operates with a six period day, with a six-day rotating schedule. There is a three minute passing period between classes. The school day is from 7:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Class periods are fifty-seven minutes long. Students attend a thirteen minute long homeroom period at the beginning of the day. During this time daily announcements are made, attendance is taken, and any documents are handed out. Students have a twenty-five minute lunch period during period four. Grade six students eat lunch at the beginning of period four, grade seven students have lunch in the middle of period four, and grade eight students eat lunch after attending their period four class.

Teachers teach four periods a day, they have one period for preparation, and one period reserved for administrative duties.

All students have English Language Arts, math, science, and social studies daily. Related arts classes are different for the three different grades as follows:

- Grade six - Reading, three days out of the six-day cycle
- Enrichment math, three days out of the six-day cycle
- Music, one day out of the six-day cycle
- Band, for students who chose to participate, one day out of the six-day cycle

- Grade seven - Health, half of the school year, ninety days of instruction
- Art, half of the school year, ninety days of instruction
- Band, for students who chose to participate, one day out of the six-day cycle

- Grade eight - Computer programming, half of the school year, ninety days of instruction
- Spanish, half of the school year, ninety days of instruction
- Band, for students who chose to participate, one day out of the six-day cycle

All students have physical education two days out of the six-day cycle. The remainder of the periods are skills periods. One half of each of these periods is used for i-Ready reading and math. The remainder of the period is used by students for silent reading or completing other classroom assignments. Students have the option to attend band class in place of one or two of their skills classes.

The following programmatic and support structures are in place to meet the needs of all students:

- We have a math interventionist who assists students in need during their skills classes. Students sign up for this service through their math teacher. This time can be used for academic intervention, test make-up, or work make-up in case of absence. We also have a math remediation program available for all students after school Monday through Thursday for one hour. Again, students sign up for this service through their math teacher and this time can be used for academic intervention, test make-up, or work make-up in case of absence.
- We also have a reading specialist who services students during their skills classes. Students in need of this service are identified using the i-Ready Reading diagnostic test at the beginning of the school year. Students attend this extra reading class either one or two days during the six-day cycle. Student progress is monitored throughout the school year.
  - Please note, the reading specialist is a position that works with general education students. The reading interventionist is a separate special education position. The reading interventionist position only works with special education students. The reading interventionist office should be included in the special education category as that office is only used by special education students.
- We offer an inclusion model for all classes with special education students fully included in all offerings whenever possible. In some cases, based on individual needs, students are educated in a substantially separate setting for one or more classes.
- Support of our English Language Learners takes place in core classrooms from teachers who have received Sheltered English Immersion endorsement from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and when appropriate receive direct instruction from an ELL teacher in a substantially separate setting.

The aforementioned programmatic and support structures are organized within a tiered framework and are accessible to all students. These supports are also utilized by students receiving special education services, as well as those benefiting from Universal Design for Learning approaches.

At Joseph Case Junior High School we also have a popular advisory program. Every student at our school is assigned an adult advisor when they arrive in grade six. Students stay with this advisor throughout their three years at our school. The groups are approximately ten students. We have an alternate schedule in place for advisory days. The advisory period takes place at the beginning of the day followed by a shorter period one, two and three. Starting period four, the schedule reverts back to the regular daily schedule. While advisory periods are scheduled at the beginning of the school year, we can revert to this schedule and hold additional advisory periods for any issue that may arise that requires discussion with students. This program creates an additional relationship for students that they might not usually have. Having a trusted adult in the building has been shown to be beneficial for students and leads to greater social and emotional growth.

Our current schedule provides ample instructional time in the core subject areas. It also allows us to provide students with related arts classes including music and band. Our schedule does limit these related arts classes to specific grades. Also, our current schedule limits the amount of common planning and meeting time for teachers.

We analyze our schedule on a yearly basis to determine if we are using our instructional time in the most efficient way possible. With a new junior high school building, additional opportunities will present themselves to help us in the area of scheduling. If determined that the new middle school will be built adjacent to the

current Joseph Case High School, schedule modifications will be made to allow for cross over classes and programs between the two schools.

We currently have a six period, six day rotating cycle. Our high school operates on a seven day, seven period cycle. In order to utilize the opportunity for cross curricular activities between high school and junior high school, we would need to modify our schedule to mirror the seven day, seven period cycle that the high school now operates under.

### ***Proposed Changes***

*As Swansea Public Schools moves forward with plans for a new Junior High School building on the shared campus with Joseph Case High School, the high school is also beginning to review its master schedule. This creates an ideal opportunity for both schools to collaborate on a unified scheduling approach that strengthens alignment and fully maximizes the benefits of a shared campus for junior high students.*

*Our junior high and high school currently coordinate their start and end times to share transportation resources, and the district plans to maintain this practice. However, fully aligning the schedules at both buildings on the shared campus presents numerous additional educational and operational opportunities that we are eager to implement. Our scheduling goals focus on increasing access for students and the sharing of resources on the campus.*

*Aligned schedules will allow the district to more effectively utilize staff resources, including the ability to share substitute teachers, interventionists, and special education service providers. In particular, shared special education providers will be able to deliver services with greater consistency and intentionality through designated, coordinated service times for students. This interconnected approach will expand access to student supports and ensure that supports are delivered at a time that is responsive to students' diverse needs. Aligned schedules will allow our district to further grow unified activities at the secondary level, including Best Pals, unified sports, and additional inclusive programs that strengthen relationships and community among students.*

*An aligned schedule will also increase opportunities for common planning time and grade 6-12 department meetings. These planning meetings will support improved vertical alignment of curriculum in grades 6-12.*

*The new schedule will open pathways to enhanced academic programming. One possible solution involves using the existing high school campus as an alternate site for a new Junior High School. With the proximity of the two buildings and the alignment of schedules, junior high students will have greater access to advanced coursework such as accelerated mathematics, world languages, and expanded elective options. Access to advanced coursework for students at the jr. high school will also promote further options for advanced coursework for these students at the high school. The aligned schedule will make it easier for junior high students to participate in extracurricular activities offered at the high school, creating additional opportunities for engagement and developing a stronger sense of community. The aligned schedule will also create meaningful opportunities for high school students to mentor, tutor, and volunteer with our junior high students, allowing these supports to take place during the school day.*

*Perhaps most importantly, schedule alignment will significantly improve the transition experience from Grade 8 to Grade 9. Sharing a campus and a similar daily schedule will create more opportunities for transition activities, allowing students to become comfortable with the high school environment well before their first day as ninth graders. Through increased access to high school classrooms, facilities, programs, and staff, students will build stronger connections and experience a more seamless progression in their education with the transition to high school.*

*The benefits of a shared campus, combined with expanded academic access and improved transitions, will ensure that the new building supports both current student needs and the long-term goals of our district's strategic plan moving forward. (Amended 12-08-25)*

*Design Response: The preferred solution organizes the learning spaces into learning neighborhoods that support all core academic, specialist, and special education programs offered by the District. The intent is to distribute special education throughout the learning neighborhoods. Science is stacked vertically in the design and centrally located to the learning neighborhoods. Art, Music, and STEM spaces are located on the second floor, central to the learning neighborhoods and close to the Auditorium (performing arts) space. Highlighted plans are below:*



#### **4. Teaching Methodology and Structure**

##### **a. Administrative and Academic Organization/Structure**

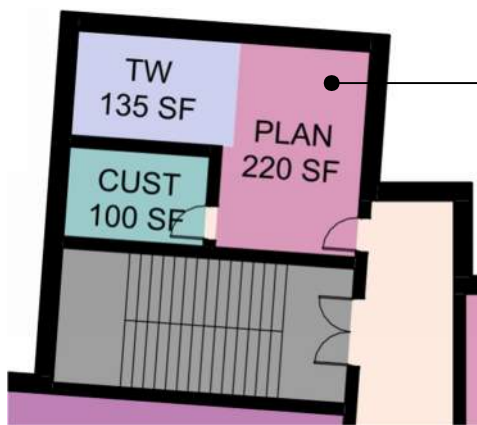
Joseph Case Junior High School has a principal and an assistant principal who are responsible for the day to day operation of the school. Our student services department consists of two school counselors and two adjustment counselors. This department is led by a department head who shares the duties of 504 coordinator with our other school counselor. Both the main office area and the student services office are too small for the number of students served and meeting space is severely lacking. At present, one of our school adjustment counselors is located in an office away from the other department members.

Academic departments are led by leadership team members who are appointed on a yearly basis. There are one or two leadership team members for each core academic department as well as a representative from special education. Our student services department head also serves on the leadership team. Meetings are scheduled monthly and the group can also meet on an as needed basis. Meeting time for the leadership team, grade levels, and departments is limited by our schedule and by the current

collective bargaining. Professional staff are required to attend up to eight (8) after school meetings of one hour in length. This is not enough time to complete all of the tasks that are required in a grade 6-8 junior high school.

In addition to the eight after school meetings that are provided in the teacher contract, our district also has three full day professional development days as well as three half day professional development days throughout the school year. The district will be looking to increase the amount of after school time that teachers are required to attend in coming years. The majority of professional development activities are planned based on feedback from professional staff, regarding their needs.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides teacher planning spaces to support the Junior High School model. Different from a Middle School model where a cohort of students have daily access to four (4) or five (5) core team teachers who are dedicated to the team of students, these planning spaces will provide space for teachers to collaborate on all aspects of the day; from professional development and class planning to student follow-up and support – See Section 6 Professional Development (Amended 12-08-25)*



*Combined teacher workroom, planning, and code-required lactation space creates an educator suite for professional development and educational collaboration on each floor that are vertically connected via an adjacent stair.*

## **b. Curriculum Delivery Methods and Practices**

At Joseph Case Junior High School students are grouped heterogeneously in all subjects with the exception of math. In math, we have accelerated classes in each grade. Students are placed in these accelerated classes using assessment data as well as teacher recommendation. Our current classroom setup places like subjects in close proximity so teachers may collaborate with maximum efficiency. We recognize the importance of an academically challenging and supportive environment to engage young adolescent learners. Student motivation, a meaningful curriculum, and student choice also are important factors for engaging middle-level learners.

Teachers use a wide variety of instructional strategies to provide a rigorous curriculum grounded in experiential and exploratory learning. Curriculum and instruction are delivered in heterogeneous groups, and inclusive classrooms with the exception of math, as stated above. In grade six, our reading teacher and enrichment math teacher do not have dedicated classroom space. These individuals move from room to room depending on the availability of space. This limits their ability to provision for learning activities ahead of class time, cutting down on time on learning.

Our district supports teachers in developing or adapting curriculum to align with experiential and exploratory learning by creating structures, resources, and professional development opportunities that encourage innovation and collaboration. We strive to provide ongoing training in project-based learning, inquiry-based instruction, and real-world applications of content, helping teachers design lessons that move beyond traditional lecture formats. The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks emphasize

essential skills and learning outcomes, while allowing flexibility for teachers to tailor lessons to their students' interests and needs. Our district empowers teachers to design curriculum that fosters curiosity, creativity, and deeper student engagement through experiential and exploratory learning. We currently do not have a formal plan, structure, or set of resources in place to guide and sustain a teacher-created curriculum that would strengthen the overall understanding of how the educational program is implemented.

**c. English Language Arts/Literacy**

| <b>Content Area</b>            | <b>Time on Learning per 6 day cycle</b> | <b>Number of Faculty</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Teaching Methodology</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| English Language Arts/Literacy | 342 minutes                             | <p>6 ELA teachers (2 per grade 6-8)</p> <p>1 reading teacher for grade 6</p> <p>1 substantially separate ELA teacher for grades 6-8</p> <p>1 reading specialist teacher for grades 6-8 for regular education students who are reading significantly below grade level</p> | <p>Whole class, small group, independent learning. Use of technology by students and teachers.</p> <p>One class at each grade level is co-taught with at least one special education teacher and an ELA teacher.</p> <p>One class at each grade level is a substantially separate ELA class with a special education teacher.</p> <p>One reading teacher instructs reading to the grade 6 students. Students take this reading class for three days out of the six-day cycle for the entire school year.</p> |

The Joseph Case Junior High School ELA curriculum is based on the 2017 Massachusetts English Language Arts and Literacy Curriculum Framework including reading, writing, language, speaking, and listening. The scope and sequence follow the path of whole group, small group, and independent learning. The ELA department is not currently using a specific curriculum resource. Rather, teachers create their own curriculum using print and online resources. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning, think independently, and work collaboratively. Our goal is to explore the possibility of adopting a curriculum which is vertically aligned from K-12.

**Current:**

There are a limited number of classrooms, classrooms size, lack of collaboration space for teachers (department meetings/team meetings), lack of student support spaces, subpar technology including wired projectors and computers, no interactive whiteboards or interactive digital displays, subpar

document cameras, lack of outlets sufficient for charging and utilizing multiple devices simultaneously, and lack of climate control (no a/c, unreliable heating system).

### Proposed Changes:

- 1:1 space and small group space, adjacent to the classroom for general education and special education to use during a class when small group or individualized instruction is needed.
- Storage Space: Ample storage space should be provided for supplies, and student projects. This might include cabinets, shelves, and storage carts that are easily accessible to both students and teachers.
- Charging and Power: Classroom equipped with multiple outlets and charging stations for Chromebooks.
- Climate Control: Since we experience very hot temperatures in fall and spring and very cold temperatures during winter, a climate control system is necessary for temperature regulation.
- Natural Light and Ventilation: Natural light and ventilation are important for creating a comfortable learning environment. The classrooms should have large windows that let in plenty of sunlight, as well as adjustable blinds or curtains for controlling glare. Adequate ventilation should be provided to ensure good air quality.
- Flexible seating area and tables for collaboration within the classroom.
- Flexible Layout: The classroom should have a flexible layout that allows for different configurations based on the activity or lesson. This might include movable desks and chairs, as well as areas for group work and individual study.
- Multiple types of surfaces for writing, conferencing, and editing.
- In-class library spaces with bookshelves and reading area.
- Technology Integration: The classroom should be equipped with modern technology such as interactive whiteboards or interactive digital displays, quality AV equipment, projectors, and computers. This allows for multimedia presentations, access to online resources, collaboration, and modeling. Document cameras and wireless tablet technology to write on resources and slides on the projector/digital display while moving throughout the class.
- Teacher's planning room with technology integration, copy machines, telephone, and restrooms for each grade level.

*Design Response: The preferred solution, as noted above, groups the learning neighborhoods and fully integrates special education and specials. The media center space has a central location for whole class instruction while the remaining space is distributed throughout the school. This approach allows spatial flexibility, differentiated seating areas, and other modalities of informal learning and social connections for both students and staff.*

### d. Mathematics

| Content Area | Time on Learning per 6 day cycle | Number of Faculty                                                                                                                            | Teaching Methodology                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Math         | 342 minutes                      | 7 math teachers (2 per grade in grades 6 and 8 and 3 in grade 7)<br><br>1 math enrichment teacher in grade 6<br><br>1 substantially separate | Whole class, small group, independent learning. Use of technology by students and teachers.<br><br>One class at each grade level is co-taught with at least one special education |

|  |  |                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                           |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | math teacher for grades 6-8<br><br>1 math interventionist for the building that supports grades 6-8 students as needed, as well as a math remediation after school program. | teacher and a math teacher.<br><br>One class at each grade level is a substantially separate math class with a special education teacher. |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### Teaching Methodology:

The Joseph Case Junior High School math curriculum is based on the 2017 Massachusetts Mathematics Curriculum Framework. The scope and sequence follow the path of whole group, small group, and independent learning. The math program for grades 6-8 is Curriculum Associates' i-Ready program. Students have access to a consumable workbook and digital platform with this program. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning, think independently, and work collaboratively.

### Current:

There are a limited number of classrooms, classroom size, lack of collaboration space for teachers (department meetings/team meetings), lack of student support spaces, subpar technology including wired projectors and computers, no interactive whiteboards or interactive digital displays, subpar document cameras, lack of outlets sufficient for charging and utilizing multiple devices simultaneously, and lack of climate control (no a/c, unreliable heating system).

### Proposed Changes:

- 1:1 space and small group space, adjacent to the classroom for general education and special education to use during a class when small group or individualized instruction is needed.
- Classroom space for Grade 6 enrichment math and 6-8 math interventionist. Neither teacher currently has a classroom.
- Ample classroom space and seating so math classes are created based on need and not limited by classroom size.
- Ample whiteboard space. Whiteboards located on a wall that would be easily visible to all students. For example the classroom should not be long with a whiteboard at the front where students would have to be rows back. All whiteboards should also be magnetic.
- Storage Space: Ample storage space should be provided for supplies, and student projects. This might include cabinets, shelves, and storage carts that are easily accessible to both students and teachers.
- Charging and Power: Classroom equipped with multiple outlets and charging stations for Chromebooks.
- Climate Control: Since we experience very hot temperatures in fall and spring and very cold temperatures during winter, a climate control system is necessary for temperature regulation. Cold air comes out of certain non-insulated areas in classrooms. Some of the heaters blow cold air out of part of it. The heat is not easily adjustable with a thermostat.
- Natural Light and Ventilation: Natural light and ventilation are important for creating a comfortable learning environment. The classroom should have large windows that let in plenty of sunlight, as well as adjustable blinds or curtains for controlling glare. Adequate ventilation should be provided to ensure good air quality.
- Flexible seating area and tables for collaboration within the classroom.

- Flexible Layout: The classroom should have a flexible layout that allows for different configurations based on the activity or lesson. This might include movable desks and chairs, as well as areas for group work and individual study.
- Technology Integration: The classroom should be equipped with modern technology such as interactive whiteboards or interactive digital displays, quality AV equipment, mounted projectors, and computers. This allows for multimedia presentations, access to online resources, collaboration, and modeling. Document cameras and wireless tablet technology to write on resources and slides on the projector/digital display while moving throughout the class.
- Teacher's planning room with technology integration, copy machines, telephone, and restrooms for each grade level.

*Design Response: The preferred solution, as noted above, groups the learning neighborhoods and fully integrates special education and specials – as described in Section C above.*

**e. Science**

| Content Area                           | Time on learning per 6 day cycle | Number of Faculty                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Teaching Methodology                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Science and Technology/<br>Engineering | 342 minutes                      | 6 science teachers (2 per grade 6-8)<br><br>There are no separate technology and engineering teachers. The technology and engineering standards are integrated into the science curriculum in grades 6-8.<br><br>Currently no special education teacher with the content area teacher.<br><br>Classroom teacher responsible for accommodating and modifying all materials. | Instruction is varied using the following instructional strategies:<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Direct instruction</li> <li>● Demonstrations</li> <li>● Exploration/discovery of phenomena</li> <li>● Independent learning</li> <li>● Cooperative learning including discussion groups and laboratory experiences</li> </ul> |

**Curriculum:**

The science department implements the standards from the 2016 Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Curriculum Framework. The curriculum is spiraled from one grade level to the next building in complexity.

The science department also implements the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Science and Engineering Practices:

1. Asking Questions and Defining Problems
2. Developing and Using Models
3. Planning and Carrying out Investigations

4. Analyzing and Interpreting Data
5. Using Mathematics and Computational Thinking
6. Constructing Explanations and Design Solutions
7. Engaging in Argument from Evidence
8. Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information

Teachers build their own curriculum using the STE Framework, NGSS Science and Engineering Practices, and supplemental resources such as Generation Genius. There is currently no text or designated science program. Laboratory experiences are provided on a small school budget for the year or funded by the teachers.

### **Materials and Equipment:**

Following is a list of materials and equipment currently utilized by the science department at Joseph Case Junior High School:

- Yearly budget of \$133.33 for all science supplies.
- Yearly subscriptions to Generation Genius, Edulastic, Kahoot, Edpuzzle.
- Most labs are supplemented with teacher funded supplies.
- Outdated equipment (old microscopes, triple beam balances, little to zero hot plates, not all rooms have sinks).
- Minimal storage in classrooms for science supplies. No common space for supplies to be stored by grade level. Each teacher stores their own materials.
- No common space for collaboration or planning.
- Chromebooks are provided to all students but minimal outlets and insufficient Wi-Fi.
- Currently not provided with any virtual tools or computer programs.
- Professional development is often requested by the teacher in the content area; very little offerings during in school professional development specific to science.
- Lacking safety equipment (no fire blankets, no sprinklers, no emergency showers, no eye wash stations, no fume hoods).
- Some classrooms have desks while others have lab tables.
- No separate area for lab preparation.
- Projectors not mounted.
- Some classrooms have document cameras but they are not available to all.
- No separate classrooms for technology and engineering and zero materials for experiences that meet these particular standards.

### **Current:**

- Limited number of classrooms resulting in shared spaces making it difficult to prep and clean up laboratory experiments.
- The classrooms are small, making it difficult to put students in cooperative groups for laboratory experiences, exploration of phenomena, and discussion groups. Lack of space and type of furniture in the classroom make it difficult for student collaboration.
- Lack of collaboration space for teachers for departmental meetings.
- No preparation space for laboratory experiences and lack of storage for shared science materials.
- No place to safely store or dispose of chemicals for science experimentation so students are not exposed to this type of experimentation.
- No refrigeration unit for chemicals or materials that may require refrigeration.
- Little to no safety equipment in the science classrooms such as fire blankets, emergency showers, eye wash stations, and fume hoods.

- Classrooms are not designed for laboratory experiences. Many of the science classrooms do not have lab tables and lack lab equipment (outdated microscopes, outdated measuring equipment/tools, hotplates or safe way to use any type of flame).
- Not all of the science classrooms are equipped with sinks or running water, or even have access to plumbing to allow for sink installation.
- No separate space for direct instruction of concepts versus a laboratory setting.
- Subpar technology including wired projectors and computers, no interactive whiteboards or digital panels, subpar document cameras, Wi-Fi not capable of supporting the entire network.
- No updated science technology such as 3D printers, augmented reality, robotics/drone labs, tools, 3D programs for exploration of body systems and other concepts etc., or science software that allows for digital collection (such as recording temperature data or projecting images from microscopes). Also, there are limited programs for coding.
- Teachers do not have access to interactive whiteboards or interactive digital displays. Not all teachers have access to wall mounted projectors or a document camera.
- Lack of outlets sufficient for charging and utilizing multiple devices simultaneously or using lab equipment.
- Lack of climate control (no a/c, unreliable heating system).
- No technology and engineering lab.
- No technology and engineering teacher (specialized).
- Small budget or teacher funded lab experiences.

### **Proposed Changes:**

- Classrooms large enough for science instruction, including laboratory and other hands-on experiences, and equipped with adequate technology to maximize instruction.
- Separate teacher planning room for departmental meetings and planning equipped with a telephone, multiple wall outlets, interactive whiteboard or interactive digital display for presentations/professional development, copy machine, refrigerator, sink and microwave as well as conference style seating/table.
- The two science teachers at each grade level should have a shared space between their classrooms that include the following: laboratory preparation room, plenty of storage for materials as well as a separate storage for chemicals with proper methods of storing and disposing of materials and a refrigerator and microwave, ice machine and dishwasher for proper clean up of glassware. There should also be plenty of counter space.
- Each laboratory setting should be equipped with a wall of sinks (different stations-approximately five sink stations).
- Each laboratory classroom should be equipped with storage high off of the ground accessible to teachers in the front and back of the room. There should be a wall of magnetic whiteboards and an interactive whiteboard or interactive digital display along the side wall (if the classrooms are built long) to allow students in any area of the classroom to easily view.
- Each laboratory setting should be equipped with safety materials such as an emergency shower, sprinklers, fire blanket, eye washing station, and eye protection (safety glasses for each student) and a fire extinguisher in the classroom.
- Each laboratory setting should be equipped with updated lab equipment: digital scales, updated microscopes that connect to the Chromebooks or compatible devices, digital thermometers that connect to the Chromebooks or compatible devices and record data, burners, glassware (graduated cylinders, beakers, etc).
- Proper ventilation system is important in the laboratory settings and windows that open are a must.

- Each laboratory setting should have lab tables that have the ability to extend to allow students who require flexible seating the ability to stand if needed. Furniture in the classroom should consist of laboratory tables on wheels for flexibility of configuration.
- Updated science technology programs: 3D experiences, virtual labs, augmented reality, programs where microscopes can connect to the computer and project images, programs where digital thermometers can connect to the Chromebook or compatible device and record data etc.
- Updated technology: Classrooms should be equipped with multiple outlets off of the floor, document cameras, projector that is mounted, interactive digital whiteboard or interactive digital displays that are mounted, quality AV equipment, and Wi-Fi that can support more complex and continued use of technology.
- Climate Control: Since we experience very hot temperatures in fall and spring and very cold temperatures during winter, a climate control system is necessary for temperature regulation.
- Technology and engineering teachers trained in the current practices and able to implement a more interactive and updated experience for the students in order to prepare them for careers using the more advanced and current technology.
- Document cameras and wireless tablet technology to write on resources and slides on the projector/digital display while moving throughout the class.
- Larger budget for funding and sustaining these labs, updated technology, and student lab experiences
- District provided professional development for technology that is to be implemented.
- Outdoor space for science activities and a possible greenhouse.

#### **Shared Spaces:**

- Shared spaces for each grade level team on each floor. These spaces can be utilized for projects and combining of classes. A large open space that can seat up to 50 students.
- The desks in this area should be desks that can be configured into groups with separate chairs.
- There should be a large interactive whiteboard or interactive digital display and quality AV equipment, in each of these spaces where teachers can seamlessly connect their Chromebook and project.

In summary, we anticipate that instructional support and sufficient budget will be available to ensure the delivery of a comprehensive, standard-aligned, and safe science program. Ensuring the delivery of a comprehensive, standards-aligned, and safe junior high school science program requires careful planning and consistent practices. Our science curriculum aligns curriculum with state standards while providing inquiry-based, hands-on learning that engages students in real-world problem-solving. Teachers use a variety of assessments to track progress and adjust instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners. Planned improvements to curriculum resources, lab infrastructure, and content-specific professional development will greatly assist with this. A strong emphasis on lab safety is essential, including clear safety procedures, proper training, well-maintained equipment, and appropriate supervision. Ongoing professional development, collaboration among teachers, and access to updated resources further strengthen program quality. By combining rigorous instruction with a culture of safety and exploration, we strive to create an environment where students can master scientific concepts while developing curiosity, responsibility, and critical thinking skills.

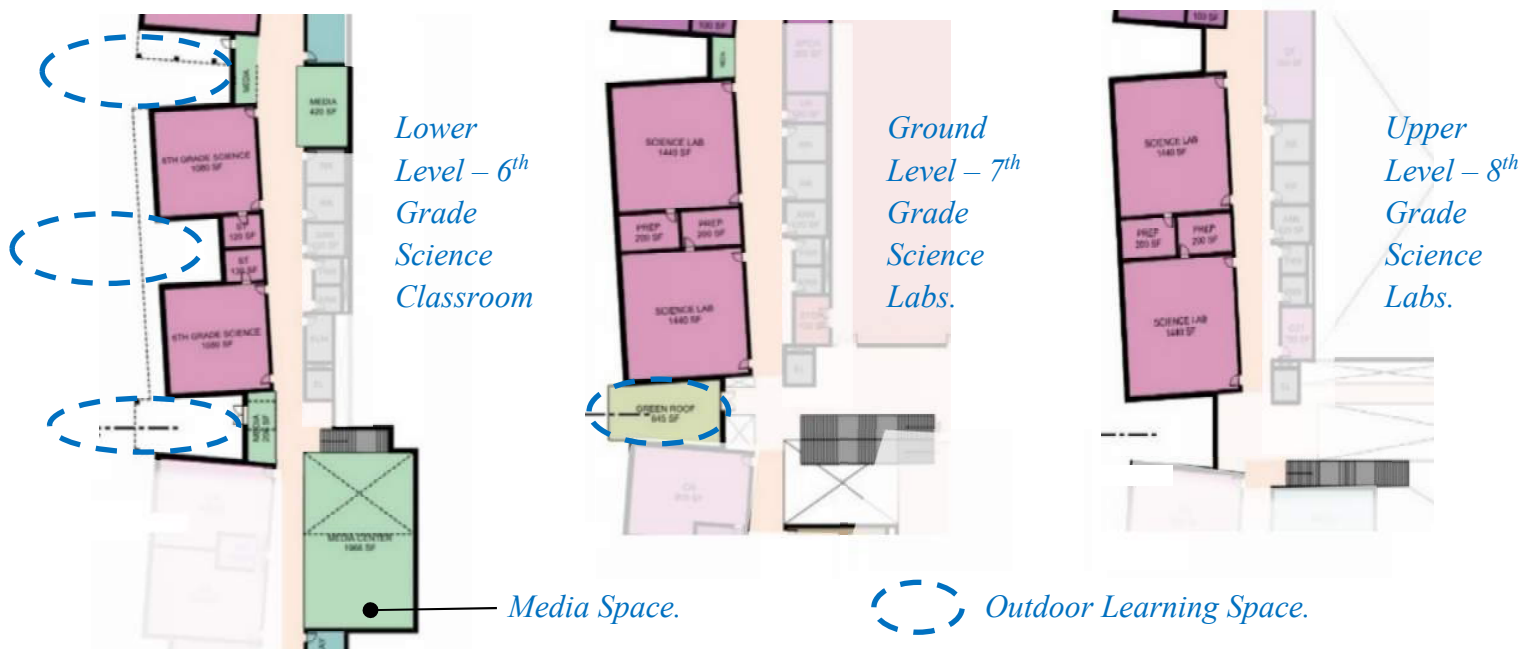
*The district's newly adopted strategic plan establishes a systematic and sustainable framework for the review, selection, and implementation of Highly Qualified Instructional Materials. The District Curriculum Team, formed as a key component of this initiative, will guide the development of a structured curriculum review cycle to ensure all instructional programs remain rigorous, equitable, and aligned with state standards. Through a deliberate process of piloting selected curriculum materials,*

*analyzing data on student learning outcomes, and incorporating educator feedback, the district will ensure that instructional resources effectively support teaching and learning. Targeted professional development will be designed to strengthen teacher capacity in utilizing newly adopted materials and implementing best instructional practices. Concurrently, careful budget planning will provide for the acquisition and maintenance of consumable and non-consumable materials necessary to support instruction. Collectively, these actions demonstrate the district's commitment to maintaining a coherent, high-quality curriculum review and implementation process that advances student achievement and fosters long-term instructional excellence. (Amended 12-08-25)*

Additionally, we currently have two science classes in each grade level. The plan is to have two science classrooms in grade six and two science labs in both grade seven and grade eight. The two classrooms per grade is essential in keeping class size at the current level of approximately twenty-three students per class. Properly equipped science classrooms are essential for hands-on and experimental learning, which is the basis of our science curriculum. The majority of our current science classrooms are too small or lack the proper equipment to make this happen. As effectively as possible, modern science classroom/laboratory will allow teachers to branch out far beyond what they are able to do now.

*Design Response: The preferred solution, as noted above, groups the learning neighborhoods and fully integrates special education and specials – as described in Section C above. In addition, 6<sup>th</sup> grade science classrooms are stacked below 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade labs that are again stacked, providing three levels of science to be centrally located within the learning neighborhoods. Labs are sized in accordance with the MSBA-guidelines to support science equipment, preparation space, and storage. Access to outdoor learning space is covered from the lower level science rooms allowing for access during weather days to encourage and support natural science units to take place in nature. Close proximity to the central stair allows science educators to share information, supplies, and learning space, providing flexibility in how units are delivered between all six (6) science spaces.*

*Close proximity to the central media space on the lower level, and outdoor science lab space on the ground floor level provides access to research and source materials outside the science classrooms and labs. Mechanical space on display lines the common hallway outside of 6<sup>th</sup> grade science, providing real-world views into the infrastructure, systems, and operations of buildings.*



**f. Social Studies**

| Content Area                              | Time on Learning per 6 day cycle | Number of Faculty                       | Teaching Methodology                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| History and Social Sciences<br><br>Civics | 342 minutes                      | 6 history teachers<br>(2 per grade 6-8) | Whole class, small group, independent learning. Use of technology by students and teachers.<br><br>One class at each grade level is co-taught with at least one special education teacher and a history teacher. |

**Current:**

Joseph Case Junior High School is currently facing challenges in its programming due to limited space and various constraints. These limitations make it difficult for educators to consistently offer interdisciplinary, and hands-on learning experiences. Social studies teachers are required to produce their own curriculum and curriculum materials. The current facilities lack flexibility, which inhibits movement, demonstrations, project-based activities, and collaborative work. As a result, the school finds it difficult to fully uphold its commitment to promoting student accessibility, engagement, action, and expression in alignment with core educational principles. Many of the school's spaces fall short in terms of accessibility, lighting, acoustics, layout, and utilities.

Joseph Case Junior High School follows the 2018 Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework, designed to equip students with the necessary skills to engage in and potentially lead a diverse society. This framework encourages communication and collaboration across different perspectives.

In 6th and 7th grades, standards are integrated from history, geography, civics, economics, and culture. Teachers employ a range of instructional strategies to engage students, including lectures, discussions, group activities, role-playing, and multimedia presentations. A key focus is placed on analyzing primary sources—such as historical documents, maps, artifacts, and multimedia—to enhance students' understanding of historical events and concepts.

In 8th grade, the civics course emphasizes the development of civic competence and awareness, encouraging students to engage in local government initiatives that benefit their communities. In all grades, projects and assignments are integrated into the curriculum to foster critical thinking, research skills, and creativity.

The junior high school history and social science curriculum aims to provide students with a well-rounded understanding of historical events, geographical concepts, cultural diversity, civic engagement, and economic principles. This is intended to prepare students to be informed, active citizens. The project design should support an inquiry-based, collaborative, and hands-on approach to teaching history and social science in junior high school. It should incorporate features such as flexible seating, ample space for safe, out-of-seat collaboration; areas within the room for students to be involved peripherally in the

lesson if such accommodation is required; and space within the room for teachers to facilitate small-group or individual consultations.

The project should include space to safely display student work as well as space for storage of resources and instructional materials. It should be adequately equipped with necessary ports for connectivity of 21st century learning tools, including but not limited to, electrical outlets for charging multiple student devices simultaneously and ceiling-mounted projectors (with wall-mounted screens) for use during whole-class instruction and incorporation of a variety of media-as-texts.

### **Proposed Changes:**

- 1:1 space and small group space, adjacent to the classroom for general education and special education to use during a class when small group or individualized instruction is needed.
- Storage Space: Ample storage space should be provided for supplies, and student projects. This might include cabinets, shelves, and storage carts that are easily accessible to both students and teachers.
- Charging and Power: Classroom equipped with multiple outlets and charging stations for Chromebooks.
- Climate Control: Since we experience very hot temperatures in fall and spring and very cold temperatures during winter, a climate control system is necessary for temperature regulation.
- Natural Light and Ventilation: Natural light and ventilation are important for creating a comfortable learning environment. The classroom should have large windows that let in plenty of sunlight, as well as adjustable blinds or curtains for controlling glare. Adequate ventilation should be provided to ensure good air quality.
- Flexible layout and seating area for collaboration within the classroom.
- Multiple types of surfaces for writing, conferencing, and editing.
- Technology Integration: The classroom should be equipped with modern technology such as interactive whiteboards or interactive digital displays, quality AV equipment, projectors, and computers. This allows for multimedia presentations, access to online resources, collaboration, and modeling. Document cameras and wireless tablet technology to write on resources and slides on the projector/digital display while moving throughout the class.
- Teacher's planning room with technology integration, copy machines, telephone, and restrooms for each grade level.

*As previously indicated, the district's newly adopted strategic plan establishes a comprehensive and sustainable framework for the review, selection, and implementation of Highly Qualified Instructional Materials. The District Curriculum Team, as outlined in this initiative, will oversee the development of a structured curriculum review cycle to ensure that Social Studies instructional programs remain rigorous, equitable, and aligned with state standards. Through a systematic process of piloting selected materials, analyzing student learning outcomes, and integrating teacher feedback, the district will ensure that classroom resources effectively promote critical thinking, civic engagement, and historical literacy. Targeted professional development will be provided to strengthen teacher capacity in implementing newly adopted materials and research-based instructional practices that support inquiry and analysis. In parallel, careful budget planning will address both consumable and non-consumable materials to maintain resource quality and program consistency. Collectively, these efforts underscore the district's commitment to a coherent, high-quality Social Studies curriculum that advances student achievement and supports long-term instructional excellence. This work directly aligns with ongoing improvements as part of a unified approach to curriculum review and instructional improvement across disciplines. (Amended 12-08-25)*

*Design Response: The preferred solution, as noted above, groups the learning neighborhoods and fully integrates special education and specials – as described in Section C above.*

**g. World Languages**

| Content Area | Time on Learning per 6 day cycle | Number of Faculty | Teaching Methodology                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Spanish      | 342 minutes                      | 1 Spanish teacher | Whole class, small group, independent learning. Use of technology by students and teachers.<br><br>Grade 8 students have Spanish for half of the school year, ninety days of instruction. |

**Current:**

Joseph Case Junior High School follows the 2021 Massachusetts World Languages Curriculum Framework. This course is taught as an introduction and is meant to prepare students for the language courses they will be taught in high school.

- Classes consist of eight (8) - grade eight classes, each with approximately 20-25 students per class depending on year and class size.
- There is one Spanish teacher at Joseph Case Junior High School.
- Only grade eight students receive Spanish instruction for two terms during the school year.
- There are approximately 497 students enrolled at Joseph Case Junior High School. 175 students are in grade eight. The Spanish teacher receives half of the grade eight students for the first two terms, and the other half of the grade eight students the last two terms of the year, totalling ninety days of instruction. Terms are switched with computer technology.
- There are six periods a day, with a six-day rotating schedule. Students receive Spanish for one period per day, totaling fifty-seven minutes.

A modern language classroom prioritizes student-centered learning and the integration of technology to enhance the language learning experience. It is an approach that recognizes the unique needs of individual learners and strives to create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that encourages student participation and collaboration. Essential components to this include: student-centered learning, technology integration, project based learning, cultural immersion, and project based learning.

The classroom where Spanish is taught is not in the grade eight section of the school due to space constraints. While the current classroom is large enough for the number of students served, it lacks modern amenities to implement the approaches stated above.

**Proposed Changes:**

- **Interactive Digital Display:** For interactive lessons, digital activities, and multimedia presentations.
- **Projector or Large Display Screen:** To display videos, presentations, or cultural content.
- **Tablets or Laptops:** For students to access language learning apps, conduct research, or collaborate on projects.

- Document camera and wireless tablet technology to write on resources and slides on the projector/digital display while moving throughout the class.
- Language Learning Platforms: Subscription to tools like Duolingo for Schools, Quizlet, or Kahoot for interactive quizzes and vocabulary practice.
- Audio Equipment: High-quality speakers and headphones for listening comprehension activities.
- Flexible Desks and Chairs: Allow for reconfiguration based on group work, pair activities, or individual tasks.
- Small Group Workstations: Encourage collaboration with dedicated spaces for group discussions.
- Comfortable Seating Areas: Beanbags or couches for informal conversation practice or reading sessions.
- Roleplay Area: Props like menus, fake currency, or travel guides for role-playing scenarios (e.g., ordering food in a restaurant).
- Listening and Speaking Stations: Equipped with audio devices for students to practice and record their speech.
- Makerspace for Projects: Supplies for creating posters, dioramas, or digital media projects about Spanish culture.

At this point in time, we have no plan to expand our world language program as this would require additional staff. However, a new school building in close proximity to the current high school would provide the opportunity for students to take additional world language courses in conjunction with high school instructors.

*Design Response: The preferred solution, as noted above, groups the learning neighborhoods and fully integrates special education and specials – as described in Section C above.*

*All learning spaces within the learning neighborhoods will be designed to promote conventional, innovative-plug-in, and next generation human-centered practices. Flexible and adaptable spaces will encourage and support advances in education and technology. Health and wellness features will include natural daylight, exterior views, proper acoustics, zero-VOC finish products, carbon-dioxide monitoring, and zero-chemical cleaning requirements. Display and working walls, differentiated furniture types, and multi-platform technology will enable student-led learning to take place.*



*Eliot School – Finegold Alexander Architects*

## h. Academic Support Programming Spaces

### Current:

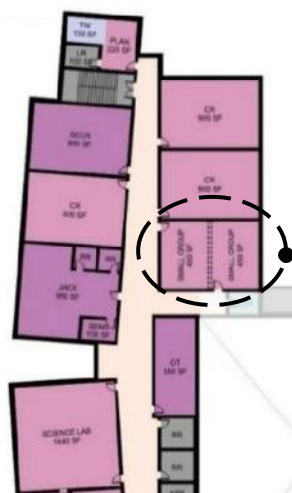
At Joseph Case Junior High School we currently have academic intervention in math and reading during the school day. There is a full time teacher assigned to these duties in each subject. Students are placed in the reading intervention class based on their i-Ready reading diagnostic scores. Students attend reading intervention either one or two days out of their six-day cycle. The i-Ready diagnostic tests are given three times a year and student progress is tracked using these assessments. Students are not assigned to a class for math intervention. Rather, students may attend math intervention on an as needed basis during their skills classes. Attendance may be at the student's request or at the recommendation of their math teacher. English language learners are serviced by one of two district-wide English language teachers.

Currently, none of these intervention teachers has a designated teaching location. Instead, they utilize empty classrooms, the media center, or the cafeteria for their classes. This may or may not be in the grade level section of the building that corresponds to the grade they are teaching. This creates logistical problems with students moving throughout the building and is less than ideal for teacher planning and provisioning.

### Proposed Changes:

- A classroom in each section of the building designed specifically for academic intervention at that grade level. This space could be shared by math, reading and English language acquisition. This space could also serve as office space for the teachers delivering these services.
- Technology Integration: The academic intervention classroom should be equipped with modern technology such as interactive whiteboards or interactive digital displays, quality AV equipment, projector, and computers. This allows for multimedia presentations, access to online resources, collaboration, and modeling. Document cameras and wireless tablet technology to write on resources and slides on the projector/digital display while moving throughout the class.

*Design Response: The preferred solution, as noted above, groups the learning neighborhoods and fully integrates special education and specials – as described in Section C above. Small group rooms are located within the learning neighborhood to support these interventions without having to leave the learning neighborhood(s). As in all academic space, preferred technology solutions, equipment, and surfaces will be provided to support different modes of teaching and learning to take place. All learning spaces will be equipped with teacher amplification devices and designed to meet acoustic best practices for learning environments.*



*Small group intervention space located within the learning neighborhood and in close proximity to a stair for movement between levels.*

**i. Student Guidance and Support Services**

| <b>Content Area</b>           | <b>Number of Faculty</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Teaching Methodology</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Academic and Social-Emotional | <p>2 Whole School Counselors (Guidance Counselors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divided Alphabetically</li> </ul> <p>2 School Adjustment Counselors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divided based on the needs of each student</li> <li>• See Special Education section regarding support services</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal counseling check-ins</li> <li>• Academic counseling/planning</li> <li>• Social skills groups</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Executive functioning support</li> <li>• Needs assessments</li> <li>• Student re-entry meetings</li> <li>• Connecting families to community resources</li> <li>• Collaboration with community service providers</li> <li>• Whole class lessons (i.e. coping skills)</li> <li>• Create student schedules</li> <li>• Social-emotional learning</li> <li>• Support for school/home difficulties</li> <li>• Provide brain break/space for students to get back on track and ready to learn</li> <li>• Provide quiet space for a test or quiz</li> <li>• Provide a safe, supportive space for students</li> <li>• Help students learn and follow the handbook and classroom expectations</li> <li>• Create attendance improvement, behavior, or building plans for students</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with administrators, teachers, and staff</li> <li>• Communicate successes with families</li> <li>• Star of the Month student recognition and breakfast to celebrate the accomplishment</li> <li>• Promoting inclusion, awareness, and kindness throughout the school</li> <li>• MCAS preparation and administration</li> <li>• Supporting the transition from grade 5 to junior high and preparing grade 8 for high school</li> <li>• Conduct and manage 504 and IEP meetings/plans</li> <li>• Individualized goal-focused counseling for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)</li> <li>• Provide in-class supports (i.e. social-emotional, social skills, executive</li> </ul> |

|  |  |                                                            |
|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | functioning, behavior, etc.) as determined in school plans |
|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------|

The Joseph Case Junior High School counseling curriculum is based on an eclectic blend of psychoeducational strategies, stylistic techniques, and evidence-based practices. More specifically, counselors help students work on their social-emotional skills by utilizing the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework (self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, self-management, and relationship skills), Michelle Garcia Winner's social thinking framework (social competencies, flexible thinking, and social problem solving), positive/strength-based approaches, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) inspired strategies, metacognition, and zones of regulation. Counseling methods are implemented via talking, processing, modeling, coaching, role plays, collaborative problem-solving, and other interactive techniques.

### **Current Operations:**

The two school counselors and 1 school adjustment counselor share an office suite on the first floor. The second school adjustment counselor is located on the second floor.

### **Physical Space Issues:**

- One counselor is located on the second floor, a substantial distance away from the other 3 counselors making it more difficult to communicate and collaborate
- Limited areas to hold small groups
- Limited areas to hold meetings (there is only 1 area that the entire school shares)
- Meeting spaces do not have presentation capability
- A closet inside one of the offices that is not accessible to all
- An office that has 2 doors
- Office doors have beveled windows creating less privacy
- Compact common space
- Single stall bathroom
- 4th counselor does not have easy access to a copier
- There is no space for a secretary to triage student needs and complete additional clerical work

### **Proposed Changes:**

- The most ideal that would best support the needs of the department is for these 4 offices within close proximity and a shared common area.
  - Each office would have enough room for a desk, bookcase, filing cabinet chairs, and a table that can fit up to 4 students for a small group.
- A larger common space for students with an area big enough for at least 2 tables and a couch.
- A meeting space with presentation capability.
- A smaller flex space that could be used for multi-function: fit a small desk or table with 2 chairs. This could be used by school staff or outside providers.
- A copy room for counselors or a big enough common space to fit a larger copier/scanner (not shared with the school).
- Storage Space: Ample storage space should be provided for supplies, in a central location accessible to all counselors.
- A separate storage space for MCAS preparation and materials.
- Natural Light and Ventilation: Natural light and ventilation are important for creating a comfortable learning environment. The offices should have large windows that let in plenty of

sunlight, as well as adjustable blinds or curtains for controlling glare and providing privacy. Adequate ventilation should be provided to ensure good air quality.

- 2 private and gender neutral, single stall bathrooms (1 at the very least). These can be used for students who need extra privacy and staff (this can be part of a student's plans).
- Reimplementation of a counseling secretary where the secretary has room for a desk to triage student needs and complete clerical work. This may include printing schedules, attendance reports, academic reports, and mailing academic and attendance letters home.
- Charging and Power: Offices should be equipped with multiple outlets.
- Food preparation: A small area to fit a small refrigerator, microwave, and coffee machine.
- Climate Control: since we experience very hot temperatures in fall and spring and very cold temperatures during winter, a climate control system is necessary for temperature regulation.
- Interior doors without windows for safety and privacy.

*Design Response: The preferred solution distributes the counseling leaders within a 2-level suite, close to the main entrance of the school. This solves two significant issues: one - sharing of equipment, resources, and knowledge of students' "day-in-the-life; and two - acknowledging the separation of administration and counseling functions. The special education team and counselors are co-located to provide support to students in the same inclusive manner. As parents and specialists visit the school, a conference room is located within the main office to provide privacy and ease of access needs. The upper floor counseling area is adjacent to a distributed media center area for students who prefer a quieter space near counseling for lunch and also serves as a waiting space for students who seek assistance.*



## 5. Teacher Planning

### **Current:**

Joseph Case Junior High School currently has three teacher planning spaces for all teachers. Teachers' rooms on the first and second floor are small and have a table capable of seating no more than six people. Each of these rooms has a refrigerator and microwave and, as such, teachers utilize these spaces to eat lunch. There is no other designated dining space for teachers, so many teachers choose to eat in an empty classroom. These teachers' rooms do not have a telephone. There is a single teacher restroom in each of these areas.

A teacher preparation area has been created in the basement of the building. This area is large and has tables and carrels in which teachers can work. There is a refrigerator in this area as well as a telephone. There is no restroom in this area. For the most part, teachers do not utilize this area, as it is in the basement and remote compared to other areas of the school. In addition, the gym is directly above and this area becomes noisy when physical education classes are taking place above.

The math interventionist, enrichment math teacher, grade six reading teacher, and grade six special education teacher share an office in a converted closet outside of the gymnasium. These teachers do not have a classroom of their own and this is the only space they have to store their personal belongings and complete preparation and paperwork. The reading specialist uses an office in the basement. The grade seven and eight special education teachers share an office between two rooms in the seventh grade section. Again, this is the only space they have to store their personal belongings and complete preparation and paperwork.

Our current schedule provides very little time for common planning. Grade level subject area teachers do have two to three days during the six-day cycle when their preparation periods overlap. Grade level teams do not have time built into their current schedule for common planning.

### **Proposed Changes:**

In a new junior high school it is imperative that teachers have ample space to prepare, plan, and collaborate. Each grade level should have a work room with individual teacher workstations and flexible seating. Each grade level section should also have a larger room with a flexible layout that would be available to accommodate various types of school, grade or discipline specific professional development activities, such as workshops, seminars, and group discussions. This should include movable furniture and multipurpose areas that can be reconfigured to suit different needs. These spaces should be equipped with modern technology to support interactive presentations, video conferencing, and online collaboration. Each of these areas should also be adjacent to teacher restroom facilities in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of all faculty and staff. Teacher planning rooms offer a crucial opportunity for faculty, across grade levels and disciplines, to discuss student progress while maintaining confidentiality.

There should be a teacher dining area large enough to hold an entire grade level team. This space should be organized in such a way to encourage collaboration and work during non-lunch periods, as well as to provide a space for teachers to enjoy their short lunch period with their colleagues.

*Design Response: The preferred solution combines the MSBA-guideline teacher workroom within the teacher planning space noted above in Section 4a. In addition, there is a centrally located faculty dining space (Lunch Room) for teachers having lunch which also provides space for multi-functional uses, such as professional development sessions, and other unscheduled meetings throughout the day.*

*Combining the MSBA Guideline Teacher Workroom with Core Academic Space swapped from Classroom net square footage (NSF) provides space needed for faculty to meet in a dedicated space where professional*

development resources. Locating these spaces, as conceptually depicted in Section 4a, between all three levels of the learning neighborhood, allows faculty to have convenient access to this space. See Section 6 Professional development. Due to the limited available space within the MSBA-guideline, Faculty Dining – Lunch Room – is centrally located for convenient access to a dining venue and as another small (228 NSF) space that can be used for professional development (Section 6) and teacher planning (Section 4a). (Amended 12-08-25)



Teacher lunchroom centrally located in the learning neighborhoods with an overlook to student dining below. Combined with teacher planning/workroom spaces, this rounds out the dedicated places for professional development and educational collaboration.

## 6. Professional Development

### Current:

Strong junior high schools rely on collaboration among staff and ongoing professional growth. Our schedule and facilities must foster teamwork among grade-level teams, subject departments, and professional learning communities to enhance curriculum, teaching practices, and student success.

### Proposed Changes:

In a new junior high school, consideration should be given to the development of professional development space that is flexible, appropriately lit, technology-rich, ergonomically comfortable, accessible to all professionals and conducive to presentations and collaboration.

Our plan includes creating flexible, multipurpose spaces within the school to facilitate collaboration, professional development, and small-group student interventions. Each grade-level area will feature a shared teacher workspace for collaboration and meetings. Larger gatherings will take place in adaptable spaces such as the library or media center, equipped for flexible configurations with technology for presentations and professional learning sessions. For all-staff meetings, the cafeteria will serve as a central space designed for

presentations and group instruction. This might include movable furniture and multipurpose areas that can be reconfigured to suit different needs. These spaces should be equipped with modern technology to support interactive presentations, video conferencing, and online collaboration.

In addition to eight one hour long after school meetings that are provided in the teacher contract, our district also has three full day professional development days as well as three half day professional development days throughout the school year. The district will be looking to increase the amount of after school time that teachers are required to attend in coming years. The majority of professional development activities are planned based on feedback from professional staff, regarding their needs. We are consistently looking for ways to improve our professional development program. Additional after- school time and additional full day professional development would assist in providing teachers with all of the professional knowledge they require to do their jobs effectively on a daily basis.

*Teachers currently meet by department one period during each six-day cycle as part of an administrative preparation period. This time will be strategically leveraged to expand professional development and collaboration opportunities. Utilizing this time for structured, job-embedded professional development would allow teachers to collaborate in reviewing student data, aligning curriculum, and sharing effective instructional practices. Emphasizing collaborative planning fosters consistency across grade levels and content areas while promoting a shared commitment to continuous improvement. Aligning these efforts with district goals ensures that professional learning remains focused, efficient, and directly supportive of enhanced instructional quality and student achievement. (Amended 12-08-25)*

*Design Response: As noted and diagrammed above, the preferred solution provides dedicated teacher planning / workrooms within the learning neighborhood, a faculty lunchroom, and a centrally located media center, all of which will serve as venues for professional development. In addition, the proposed auditorium is sized to support all-faculty meetings and professional development sessions in a space designed for presentations with comfortable seating; as opposed to utilizing a cafeteria where lunch tables and chairs are designed for 20-minute student lunch sessions.*

## **7. Pre-kindergarten - NOT APPLICABLE**

## **8. Kindergarten - NOT APPLICABLE**

## **9. Lunch Program**

Joseph Case Junior High School has a full cooking kitchen. Cooking takes place onsite for only the students at the school. The average daily numbers are as follows:

- 140 breakfast
- 360 lunch

Total meals served: 500

The cafeteria staff consists of four (4) part-time workers who prepare and serve all of the food. Both the kitchen area and food storage equipment are inadequate for the number of students served.

The three grades at Joseph Case Junior High School all eat at a separate time. Grade six eats first, followed by grade seven and grade eight. Going forward, in our new building, we would like the flexibility to offer serving two lunch periods. The serving area is split into two sides. Most often, a main dish is served on both sides with

the various other options split between the two serving sides. Unlimited sides are available, such as salads and fruit, requiring more space for serving areas to accommodate easy access to grab & go items.

The size of our cafeteria is large enough to accommodate our current largest class of 175. In the past we have had classes of over two-hundred that created a need for additional seating. In order to provide adequate seating for our students, the serving area is cramped creating the need to send students to the serving line in small groups. We currently have both static tables and fixed booths. This makes it difficult to reconfigure this area for various uses.

The cafeteria should be a multi-use space that supports multiple activities. When meals are not being served, this space will double as a study center, lounge area, or learning commons and should have appropriate technology included to allow for group presentations. This technology should include scalable interactive digital displays and quality AV equipment capability.

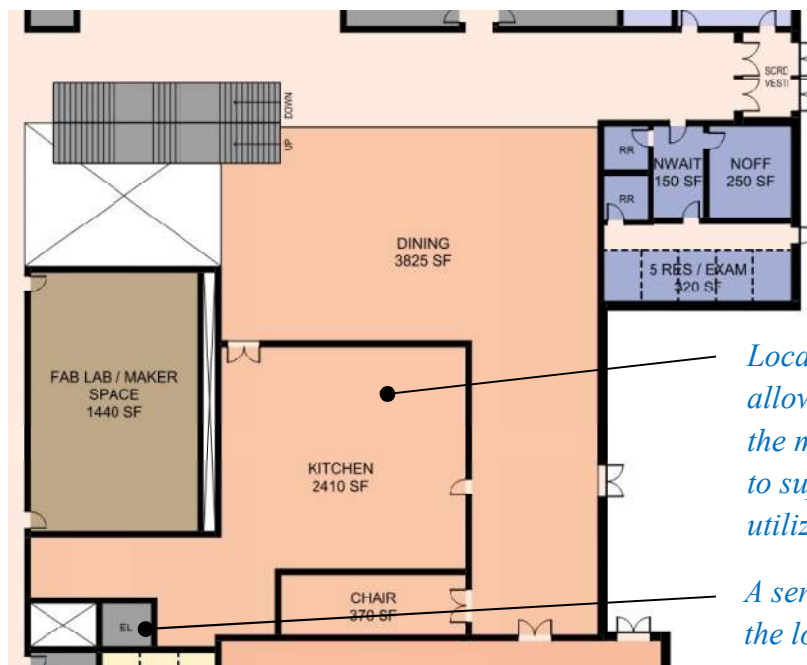
Modular tables should be used that can be configured in many ways to make it simple to convert the space from one use to another. Tables should be on casters or able to be folded up and easily stored.

The location of food delivery, tray pick-up and other circulation elements should be designed to maximize the efficiency of the dining space. Currently all trays and lunch materials used by students are disposable. In addition to traffic flow, this space should be designed for maximum efficiency of our food preparation and clean-up areas. The kitchen should have enough square footage so that the equipment and stations are organized to best serve the kitchen staff using them.

Ideally, the cafeteria will be an open space with large windows. Adjacent outdoor space should be designed for outdoor seating. Outdoor seating should provide seating for at least half of the class size to utilize during lunch. The outdoor space can also be utilized for other classes, when not in use for lunch and weather permitting. This further relieves the congestion in the cafeteria and provides students the opportunity for beneficial outdoor air when the weather permits.

The kitchen Food Service Director has been engaged in User Group meetings, and will be part of future kitchen design meetings during Schematic Design. We acknowledge the 2 seatings guideline.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides a space to accommodate 255 students for lunch (50% of 510 enrollment). The location is directly adjacent to the main entrance and Nurse Suite for ease of access by the community during off-hours, and student access to health services during lunch periods for medication distribution. The location also provides direct access to outdoor dining areas and the ability to expand the cafeteria in the future, if more academic space is ever added to the school due to higher enrollments. More space has been proposed, as a deviation to the MSBA-guidelines for the kitchen area in order to provide the minimum space needed for equipment clearances, serving 255 students at one time, and food storage.*



*Main Entrance*

*Locating the kitchen on the Ground Level allows for placing the Dining adjacent to the main entrance and near the Auditorium to support community functions; specifically utilizing the Dining area as the lobby.*

*A service elevator will be used to access the lower level for service and deliveries.*

*Auditorium*

## 10. Technology Instruction Policies and Program Requirements

### Current:

#### Technology Instruction:

The Gateway to Computer Programming course is the sole computer science instruction currently taught at Joseph Case Junior High School. The Gateway to Computer Programming curriculum is aligned with the 2016 Massachusetts Digital Literacy and Computer Science (DLCS) Curriculum Framework. Vertical alignment with the Computer Science & Instructional Technology department at Joseph Case High School has been considered when determining the scope and sequence for this course.

The focus of the Gateway to Computer Programming course is embedded in the Computing Systems and Computational Thinking strands of the DLCS Framework and utilizes the Computer Science Discoveries course from Code.org. This is an introductory computer science course that enables students to engage with computer science as a medium for creativity, communication, and problem solving.

- Classes consist of eight (8) - grade eight classes, each with approximately 20-25 students per class depending on the year and class size.
- There is one technology teacher at Joseph Case Junior High School.
- Only grade eight students receive computer technology instruction for two terms during the year.
- There are approximately 497 students enrolled at Joseph Case Junior High School. 175 students are in grade eight. The technology teacher receives half of the grade eight students for the first two terms, and the other half of the grade eight students the last two terms of the year, totaling ninety days of instruction. Terms are switched with Spanish class.
- There are six periods a day, with a six-day rotating schedule. Students receive computer technology for one period per day, totaling fifty-seven minutes.
- Students utilize 1:1 Chromebooks to access the technology curriculum. A small number of students utilize iPads for specialized curriculum and programmatic needs.

Instruction takes place in the existing Maintenance Building. This is a separate building in the rear of the main

building, designed and constructed in the 1950's for vehicle maintenance. The classroom's age, layout, and physical arrangement of the space is sufficient, but will require a redesign for the proposed new building. This classroom contains a mobile projector, two whiteboards, and a secured metal cabinet. A teacher desk and student tables and chairs complete the space. This classroom is air conditioned by a residential grade window unit.

### **Joseph Case Junior High School Technology:**

Swansea Public Schools is committed to providing a personalized, digital learning environment so all students can achieve their full potential. Currently, Joseph Case Junior High School is supported in all disciplinary areas with a technology infrastructure that is designed to be accessible and secure for all staff and students. Google Workspace for Education Plus is used throughout the district to connect educational resources and provide productivity tools. Additional digital resources are also utilized, including, but not limited to, i-Ready, Pear Assessment, Generation Genius, Discovery Education, Edgenuity, Edpuzzle, Blocksi, Kahoot, Kami, Quizizz, Quizlet, etc.

Administration, including two administrative assistants, and one special education coordinator are equipped with desktops. The nursing staff utilize laptops. All other teachers and staff utilize Chromebooks. Digital displays to enhance productivity and efficiency are sometimes provided to staff, depending on the workload and area of responsibility. Classrooms are equipped with a mobile or wall mounted projector and limited classrooms have access to a document camera.

Students at Joseph Case Junior High School are provided with 1:1 Chromebooks that are age-appropriate and designed to support individual learning needs. Educators can access resources to present the content through multimedia, allowing students to produce academic work demonstrating what they have learned. The 2024-2025 school year is the first school year that the Joseph Case Junior High School implemented a 1:1 Chromebook initiative for all students. Students are assigned a Chromebook at the beginning of the school year that they are responsible for and can use at school and at home for educational purposes.

The district technology department implements and maintains the network infrastructure for Joseph Case Junior High School. The district installed a Fiber Optic Cable Municipal Area Network (FMAN) to facilitate the interconnection of all seven school facilities in a star topology for redundancy and efficiency. Network connected devices benefit from a 1 GB symmetrical internet bandwidth, which is crucial for both consuming and producing digital content without latency. Currently, wireless access points are installed throughout the classrooms, common areas, and office suites to provide total Wi-Fi coverage at Joseph Case Junior High School. School Dude ITDirect is used for requesting and tracking technology issues through this helpdesk system.

Teachers at Joseph Case Junior High School engage in ongoing professional development relative to technology needs and educational resources.

### **Proposed Changes:**

#### **Technology Instruction:**

The Gateway to Computer Programming course should expand to include a technology course for students at each grade level at Joseph Case Junior High School, not solely grade eight. The DLCS standards allow for the expansion of additional technology courses for grades six and seven. Hiring at least one technology/STEM teacher to expand learning opportunities for all students.

Two separate STEM spaces are needed. Both STEM spaces could mirror each other where there would be

instructional space, for whole class and small group instruction, and additional makerspace where students would have ample space and resources to plan, create, build, and test their creations. Designated desktop workstations, laptops, or appropriate mobile devices would be necessary in this space. This technology is needed to expand the Gateway to Computer Programming and STEM programs.

As noted in the Spatial Summary, one STEM room is currently programmed as a digital lab for our Digital Music and Digital Arts sections; and the second STEM room is programmed as a Maker-Space / Fabrication Lab. Separating the “clean” technology-sensitive space from the "dirty" exploration / creation space.

STEM and makerspaces should be outfitted appropriately with functional working spaces and cutting edge technology. Examples for consideration include, but not limited to, the following:

- Computing and Software: Compatible computers, access to various coding platforms, 3D design software, digital design software, and data analysis software. Digital microscopes, data logging devices, AR/VR technology, and quality audio/video recording equipment.
- Robotics and Automation: Educational robots, robot kits, and drone labs.
- Hardware and Maker Tools: 3D printers, colored printers, circuit boards and components, soldering irons and tools, laser cutters, engineering and design materials and tools.
- Functional and flexible working spaces.
- Adequate storage space for equipment, supplies, and project storage.
- Access to safety equipment.

Refer to the Science, Technology Instruction Policies and Program Requirements, and Visual Arts sections for proposed enhancement of STEM/STEAM programming.

Technology Integration: The classrooms should be equipped with modern technology such as interactive whiteboards or interactive digital displays, quality AV equipment, mounted projectors, and compatible computers. This allows for multimedia presentations, access to online resources, collaboration, and modeling. Document cameras or wireless tablet technology to write on resources and slides on the projector/digital display while moving throughout the class.

### **Joseph Case Junior High School Technology:**

In a new junior high school building, the following technology areas need to be address:

- Adequacy of Devices; Quality and Availability
  - Continued 1:1 digital learning environments for staff and students.
  - Additional access to PC's, Chromebooks, and other technologies that serve specific purposes, i.e., STEM labs, Library Media Center, and non 1:1 environments for staff and students.
- 21st Century Classrooms and Learning Spaces
  - Both wired and wireless high speed internet connections.
  - Interactive digital displays, projection devices, document cameras, and integrated sound systems.
  - Spaces to collaborate, build, and share with technology.
- Robust Network Infrastructure
  - Modern networking protocols.
  - Fiber linking the building to the rest of the network.
- Adequate and Responsive Support Systems
  - Sustainable systems that allow for addition to and upgrades over time.
  - Appropriate facilities to maintain the network and building equipment.

High quality, high speed technology, and infrastructure systems within a new building are essential to the advancement of digital learning. By creating enhanced digital environments, the use of technology will be seamless, and students will continue to develop their digital skills.

The updated technology, infrastructure, and systems will continue to be managed by the district's technology department. It would be beneficial that additional staff for this department be considered with the expected addition of the proposed new technology, enhanced infrastructure, and support systems. A dedicated technology department office should be considered for this site. This space can be used as a workshop to maintain technology devices and networking equipment, a storage space for technology equipment and tools, and a climate controlled space to serve as the hub of the network needs.

Seamless technology integration and appropriate infrastructure and systems will support the educational programming outlined in this document. The additions below further articulate the technology needs to support students' academic access and success in a technology-rich learning environment:

- Interactive digital displays in each classroom and community spaces
- Monitors in each hallway, and cafeteria for digital displays (signage) allowing all to access (school announcements, lunch announcements, etc.)
- Mounted projectors, quality AV equipment, and sound systems in gathering spaces to facilitate the communication and collaboration during meetings, professional development, and student presentations. Additionally, these spaces can be used to model and demonstrate. Example of rooms: cafeteria, gym, performance space, faculty room, etc.
- Document cameras and wireless tablet technology to write on resources and slides on the projector/digital display while moving throughout the class.
- Built-in sound systems in each classroom and community space, providing surround sound as well as amplification of voice
- 2-way PA System
- Updated devices for teachers
- 1:1 Chromebooks for all students
- Device charging cabinet: shelving system, with retractable wiring
- Storage space (charging cabinets etc.) for any technology equipment to reduce visual clutter and provide clear and safe spaces for movement throughout the classroom and building

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides flexible technology spaces in the form of a dedicated digital lab and full connectivity to all learning spaces, as well as support spaces. The Digital Lab, which is one of the MSBA-defined vocations space, will be used for Digital Arts, Digital Music, and technology computer skills instruction. This space will also support the Fabrication Lab / Maker Space where computer-generated design skills can be built in programs such as robotics, wood working, metal fabrication, etc...*

*Learning spaces will be designed to incorporate digital tools and devices as listed in the proposed new school requirements above, including listening assistive devices for the hearing impaired.*



*Vocations and Technology space includes the “dirty” fabrication lab / maker space to support student projects.*

*Vocations and Technology space includes the “clean” digital lab for supporting technology skill building, digital art units and digital music units. For this reason, these art-focused spaces are grouped and located adjacent to the Auditorium for ease of access.*

## 11. Media Center/Library

### **Current:**

At Joseph Case Junior High School we have a library/media center that is used by all grades. This is a large area and is adjacent to the main office area. This area is staffed by a media center clerk. This individual is not a library media specialist and is currently employed under the secretarial contract. This clerk oversees the area and assists students with the signing out of books. This person also reshelves returned books and keeps the stacks that contain our books organized. Recently, our collection was reviewed and many outdated books were removed. The collection is now streamlined into high interest reading books for junior high school students. Our media center clerk also oversees our 1:1 Chromebook program and hands out replacement devices as needed.

Our media center is open and available for use during the school day and for extra curricular activities. Teachers are able to use this space for classroom activities that require more space than is available in the regular classroom. This often includes hands-on activities that require significant movement throughout the learning space. Teachers will also use this space when they wish to combine more than one class for an activity or presentation. Students can access the media center during their skills classes.

Our media center has a stage in front. We can configure this space to hold over two hundred people for assemblies, music performances, and drama productions. This is accomplished by removing the portable tables and filling the space with folding chairs. This space often is used for meetings where multiple people are in attendance. This is necessitated by our lack of conference room space.

### **Proposed Changes:**

A modern junior high school media center. *with distributed media spaces throughout the building (Amended 12-08-25)*, is designed to support students' learning, creativity, and collaboration while integrating technology

and traditional resources. In a new junior high school, the media center should be designed with the following needs in mind:

- Flexible Seating: Comfortable, modular furniture that can be reconfigured for different activities, such as reading, group work, or presentations.
- Zones: Designated areas for quiet study, group collaboration, media creation, and casual reading.
- Display Areas: Spaces for showcasing student work, new books, or upcoming events.
- Interactive Digital Displays: For teaching, presentations, or collaborative activities.
- 3D Printers and Makerspaces: Tools for hands-on STEM activities and creativity.
- VR/AR Equipment: Virtual and augmented reality tools for immersive learning experiences.
- Audio-Visual Equipment: Cameras, microphones, and editing software for media production.
- Books: A diverse collection of print materials, including fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels, and reference books.
- Digital Resources: E-books, audiobooks, online databases, and subscriptions to educational resources.
- Periodicals: Magazines, newspapers, and journals relevant to junior high school interests and curricula.
- Group Work Areas: Tables and spaces with tools like magnetic whiteboards or digital screens for collaborative projects.
- Small Meeting Rooms: Enclosed spaces for group work, tutoring, or one-on-one instruction.
- Presentation Areas: Spaces equipped with projectors or large screens, AV, and sound systems for lectures or student presentations.
- Media Specialist: This area should be staffed by a library media specialist trained to assist with technology, research, and literacy development.
  - The Library/Media Center would be staffed throughout the school day by a certified Library Media Specialist. This certification is issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The addition of this position has been approved by the school committee.
  - The Library Media Specialist will oversee, schedule, and maintain the range of Media Center spaces anticipated in the proposed project.
  - In Massachusetts, a Library Media Specialist is an educator responsible for managing a school's collection of physical and digital resources, teaching information and technology literacy skills to students, and collaborating with teachers to integrate these skills into the curriculum. To become a licensed Library Media Specialist in Massachusetts, one must hold a master's degree in library science and complete the required educator licensure and endorsement process, which includes demonstrating competence in curriculum and instruction with technology integration.

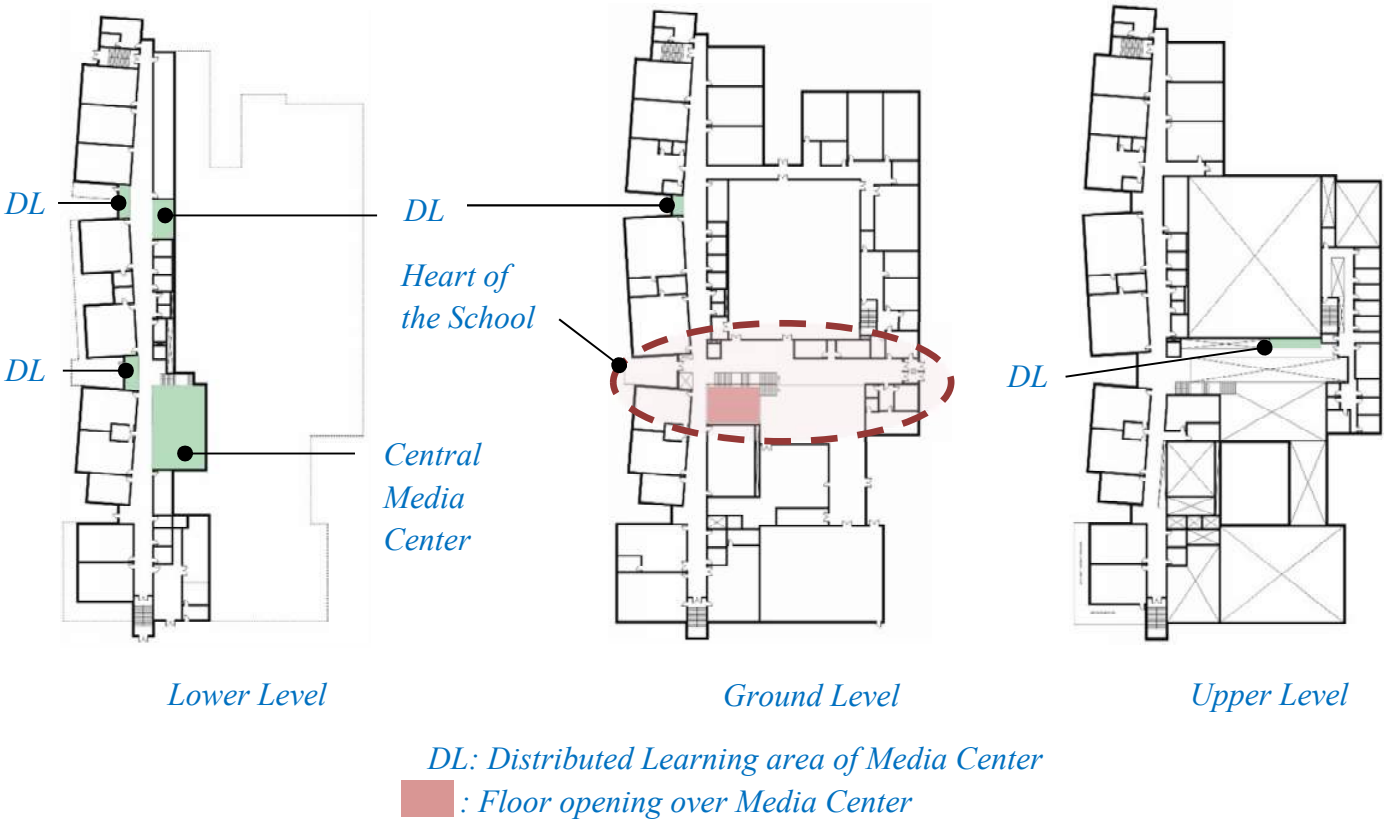
*In addition to a centrally located media center where media class instruction can take place, distributed media spaces on each floor of the new building will increase ease of access to learning materials for both students and teachers and help foster a culture of reading throughout the entire building environment. By distributing library resources, placing curated collections throughout the learning neighborhoods and floor levels, students can more readily access books and academic materials in a timely manner. A distributed media center allows for better classroom instruction integration and supports differentiated learning. Teachers can collaborate with the Library Media Specialist to ensure materials in the distributed media spaces are tailored to what the students are learning about in their classrooms. This will expand enhanced learning opportunities for students who require additional support as well as those ready for more advanced academic challenges. When books and resources are visible and accessible, students are more likely to utilize them, which leads to increased circulation rates and supports independent, self-directed learning. With curated collections spread throughout the learning neighborhoods, students benefit from ease of access, meaning that students do not have to travel far or wait to check out books. Fiction, narrative nonfiction, and other high-interest materials are available right where students spend their time, enhancing opportunities for reading and research. This system will*

require good signage and an organized inventory, making resources a visible, everyday component of the student learning experience. (Amended 12-08-25)

Design Response: The preferred solution provides a centrally located media space as the hub of media services as well as distributed space for extended learning and flexible seating for all members of the school community. These distributed areas will include various types of furniture, bookshelves, and tables for a variety of learning experiences. The IT infrastructure noted above will support these distributed areas to extend the 1:1 technology learning experience. Digital signage and digital display boards will support multi-functional lessons throughout the common areas of the school, adjacent to these distributed media center locations.

The distributed media center area on the Ground Level overlooks the outdoor learning below. The Fab Lab / Maker Space, Central Common Area, and Dining Space on the Ground Level visually connects to the Main Media Center below through an opening in the floor; creating a volumetric Heart of the School.

The distributed media center area on the Upper Level is located outside of the shared counselor and specialist office overlooking the Gym and Dining spaces; creating a quieter place for student lunch seating while remaining connected to the Dining space and also providing a reading space outside of the Counseling Suite.





*Gibbs School – Finegold Alexander Architects  
(central media center space)*



*Methuen HS – Finegold Alexander Architects  
(distributed media center space)*

## **12. Visual Arts Programs**

### **Current:**

The visual art curriculum is aligned with the 2019 Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework and the National Core Arts Standards - through Creating, Presenting, Responding, and Connecting our curriculum focuses on conceptualizing and developing creative ideas and work, creating meaningful art through the presentation of work including connections through personal experiences. The Art teacher focuses on teaching through meaningful connections with students' everyday life. Art for all students regardless of ability. The Art teacher uses whole class instruction, small group, and individual teaching methods throughout their units of study. Technology is used in every class for demonstrations, visual research, and displaying examples. The curriculum is taught through hands-on art making, using a wide variety of media and techniques. Students use digital media to create advertisements, photography editing, yearbook design and print related arts.

- Classes consist of eight (8) - grade seven classes, each with approximately 20-25 students per class depending on year and class size.
- There is one art teacher at Joseph Case Junior High School.
- Only grade seven students receive art instruction for two terms during the year.
- There are approximately 497 students enrolled at Joseph Case Junior High School. 169 students are in grade seven. The art teacher receives half of the grade seven students for the first two terms, and the other half of the grade seven students the last two terms of the year, totaling ninety days of instruction. Terms are switched with health class.
- There are six periods a day, with a six-day rotating schedule. Students receive art for one period per day, totaling fifty-seven minutes.

Instruction takes place in the existing Maintenance Building. This is a separate building in the rear of the main building, designed and constructed in 1950's for vehicle maintenance. This classroom is air conditioned by a residential grade window unit. This classroom's age, layout and physical arrangement of the space will need a redesign for the new building. Currently there are six small 30x60 inch tables with four seats per table. Three full size cabinets with a large glass cabinet for storage, a storage closet, one small 24x24 inch sink with soap and paper towel dispenser, a small work table in the back of the room for overflow and to give students more space to work. Two whiteboards, a Smartboard, and a large display bulletin board for work display. One set of cubical style storage space for students' belongings. Two printers and a teacher workstation.

Currently the art curriculum consists of many art mediums including drawing, painting, digital media and photography. Art is displayed throughout the year on a select few bulletin boards outside the main office area and the art room to showcase student work. Student work is featured at the annual Variety Art Show which features photography students work as well as grade seven student work. There are limited areas to display artwork currently.

### **Proposed Changes:**

There will be a large visual arts room, a dedicated space for students to innovate and express their talents. The curriculum will be based on the curriculum frameworks for visual art programs and connect to the core academic content. The space will be provided with substantial material storage areas, two utility sinks, drying racks, and workstations. A separate area for instructional curriculum will be connected to the workspace.

The visual arts room should be equipped with good natural and artificial lighting (including track lighting for spotting still-lives), cleanable surfaces, plenty of table space, and flexible furniture configuration.

- Easy-to-clean flooring.
- Increased built-in storage for 2D, 3D projects, and resource materials such as drying racks.
- Multiple tack display boards throughout the room and around the school for displaying resource materials and student work.
- State-of-the-art technology, including, but not limited to: electrical outlets in the walls, interactive digital display, a mounted projector, surround sound, high capacity color printer, scanner, and at least two computer stations for students.
- Large storage room separate from the classroom that includes an assortment of utility cabinets, flat files, racks, and tables as well as built-in storage.
- At least two large stainless-steel industrial sinks with backsplashes, sediment traps, and faucets that swivel.
- Large workstations/desks with room to fit 4-6 students (total of 5-8 desks) - high top tables that are tall enough for students to stand if needed. Stools that store underneath the table. Adequate storage at each table with drawers or cubbies in each desk for students to store their belongings or art supplies.
- Art exhibits/photography exhibits are often showcased around the school and would need a dedicated space with walls that hide or can move so that artwork can be displayed such as a gallery area where students and community members can view student work. Close to the media center or art department/performance area preferred.

The visual arts programming also maintains a strong connection to media, technology and photography.

- A dedicated technology area with video projection and surround sound
- 30 Chromebooks, laptops, or appropriate mobile devices
- 30 digital cameras
- Ample electrical outlets for charging devices
- At least two high capacity color printers
- At least two scanners
- At least one large format printer
- Photo/video editing and 3D design software such as Photoshop

In summary, there are no proposed changes to staffing. We continue to follow the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Frameworks and will continue to do so in the new facility. In all subjects, we are committed to continuous curriculum review and continuous improvement of our programs. Related arts at our school share common planning time to allow for cross curricular planning. In addition, our art teacher often works with

subject area teachers on cross curricular projects. We will continue to offer art only in grade seven. Offering art to additional grades would either require the addition of staff or the reduction of instructional days offered.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides the Digital Arts Lab noted above in Section 10. It is located immediately adjacent to the Art Room to support student-guided use during Art scheduling. The “clean” digital art studio allows for real-world use of technology in the arts, and the “dirty” art room provides the space to explore in real-world creation of Art.*



*Atlanta Academy – Cooper Carry*



*Berkshire School – Finegold Alexander Architects*

*Student artwork and Swansea historical displays will adorn the main entrance area in the form of an Art Gallery celebrating both students and the community. The Gallery will extend through the Heart of the School.*



*Mural Gallery Artwork – Finegold Alexander Architects*

### **13. Music and Performing Arts Programs**

#### **Current:**

#### **Music Program:**

The current Joseph Case Junior High School performing arts include band and general music classes with after school chorus. All classes align with the 2019 Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework (Create, Perform,

Respond, Connect). The program includes the arts as a vital component of each student's education, while providing an environment for students with various strengths and learning styles. The Joseph Case Junior High School music program encourages students to discover music by providing opportunities for self-expression and communication, while helping students understand the role of music in culture and history. Music education builds self-discipline and promotes self-esteem. At Joseph Case Junior High School, music classes are taught by one full time general music and instrumental band teacher. The choral program is an after school program that currently meets for one hour and fifteen minutes weekly with additional rehearsals when necessary. This program is taught with two music instructors.

Currently, only grade six students receive music instruction for a combination of one day out of the six-day cycle for the entire school year, plus one additional day out of the six-day cycle for two terms. The grade six students are switched half way through the school year for the additional music instruction class. Terms are switched with skills classes. All grade 6-8 students have the option to attend band class in place of one or two of their skills classes. There are approximately sixty-seven (67) students enrolled in band class at Joseph Case Junior High School: thirty-six (36) students are in grade six, nineteen (19) students are in grade seven, and twelve (12) students are in grade eight. We will continue, as we have done in the past, to provide instruments to any student who is financially unable to afford their own instrument. This makes our music department accessible to all students, regardless of financial status.

Joseph Case Junior High School has a long-standing music program. Currently, there is only one classroom for the general music classes and the same room is also used for band classes. The after school choral program also uses the same room as the general music and band. This creates an issue with scheduling the many after school rehearsals we provide. As a teaching space, it lacks technology, safety measures, and teaching tools, including surround speakers, which are vital in allowing students to experience music that is unfamiliar to them. Band class sizes range from about 9-20 students but are expected to grow. General music class sizes range from 20-25. It is important to note that when full band classes take place in our existing space we are no longer allowed to use the band room as we have enormously outgrown our space. This leads to the need for full band to be taught in the cafeteria or gymnasium. The cafeteria and gymnasium lacks the acoustics and logistics to appropriately accommodate this group. Students in general music currently sit in chairs, using clipboards as desks, one to two inches of space between each seat. Furthermore, there is a lack of adequate storage space required to store the numerous equipment needed to meet the needs of the students. Appropriate and adequate space for both curricular and extracurricular programs is a necessity.

Also, the music room is currently in the middle of academic classrooms side by side and classrooms upstairs from us. With no sound proofing this creates educational disturbances in our surrounding classrooms.

### **Performance Space:**

Currently, Joseph Case Junior High School does not have an auditorium, but rather a stage in the media center. The current classrooms at Joseph Case Junior High School are unable to support the music department and the drama program, given their size and acoustics. The drama program is very active, but the environment does not allow for moving set pieces, wing space, adequate sound design, lighting, and appropriate seating for viewers. The media center does not work in our current model and does not allow time during the day for students to use it as a general learning space.

### **Proposed Changes:**

#### **Music Program:**

Music performance spaces should be located near the front of the building for easy access to the public for performances and events, while allowing for greater security in the remainder of the building. Needs for this

program in the new Joseph Case Junior High School building include:

- A general music/chorus classroom with risers and chairs for students to sit and stand easily, shelves for students' music folders, a piano, magnetic white boards, and interactive digital displays for use of music-based technology programs, large TV Screens, quality AV equipment, and surround sound.
- Large instrumental classrooms for band with acoustical ceilings, windows, doors to the exterior of the building (for loading equipment on buses when traveling to festivals/performances), proximity to the stage, acoustical wall tiles, durable flooring, a large sink for instrument cleaning/maintenance, musicians' chairs and music stands, magnetic whiteboards, interactive digital displays, and quality AV equipment.
- Three smaller sized practice rooms with windows for easy viewing for music students to work individually or in small groups during the school day as well as after-school for private music lessons. The current Joseph Case High School (JCHS) music department is a great model for this structure with an office observing these practice rooms.
- Storage spaces - (similar to the JCHS) for the instrumental music library (music pull out cabinets), student instrument storage (similar to the JCHS storage space), school-owned instrument inventory, music chair/stands, rack storage, percussion equipment, microphones/amps/electronics.
- Proper acoustical and lighting design for all spaces.
- Access to a performance technology lab for smaller performances, after-school productions, and a performance-ready practice space.
- The music technology room should be close to the technology and computer science classrooms in order to collaborate cross curricular.
- A performance space with a stage large enough to fit 80-90 students with chairs, music stands, percussion equipment, and instruments, and 40 singers on choral risers. It will include state-of-the-art curtains, lighting, sound, and recording equipment appropriate at the junior high school level. The audience capacity must seat the minimum of 250 seats.

The decision was made to accommodate the restrooms by locating core building restrooms for both staff and students in proximity to all educational spaces; rather than dedicated Music Room restrooms. Music storage for the entire program needs are reflected in the Spatial Summary. The digital music space is the STEM space to be utilized as a Digital Music Lab, and shared with the Digital Arts. This STEM space will be in close proximity, although maybe not immediately adjacent to, the Music Room and Art Room. The intent is to run sections within the spaces as a class with educator oversight. Computer Science classes will also be scheduled in the STEM Digital Lab, to round out the utilization of that space.

### **Performance Space:**

For the proposed new Joseph Case Junior High School building the following key reasons are being cited as to why a performance space would benefit the students of Joseph Case Junior High School:

- A performance space will provide space for band and chorus programs.
- A performance space will allow Joseph Case Junior High School students in band and chorus to perform for an audience of family and peers in their own familiar space, bringing a level of great pride to their performances.
- A performance space will allow the drama program to thrive at Joseph Case Junior High School.
- Students will learn to perform in the many different roles that are professional for a dramatic performance.
- A performance space provides space where the student body will gather for assemblies.
- A performance space provides opportunities for community use of the space. Possible uses include graduations, ceremonies, town meetings, plays, dance recitals, and other live performances, which

would contribute to a sense of community togetherness and pride.

- A minimum of three large changing rooms (boy, girl, other) with space for multiple vanities in each room. This space should be able to have costume and makeup storage.

The district's educational commitment to the Performing Arts, through its music and drama programs, is critical to its Junior High School educational program. Annually, a high number of students leave the district between junior high and high school, for various reasons, and the district's goal for their Junior High School's future is to strengthen the bridge between 8th and 9th grade through feeder programs that start in junior high school and continue in high school. The music program is part of the district's active learning curriculum, and the drama program is an extra-curricular activity introducing and preparing students for their high school programs. Moving forward the need is to enhance these programs in a meaningful way for the students of Swansea to see a pathway into the high school, to encourage remaining in the District for high school.

For this reason, the district requests a 250-seat auditorium to support these programs at the junior high school level. The auditorium will be utilized daily for music and drama rehearsals both during and after school. The junior high school delivery model is geared towards creating a high school environment where students can select courses of interest in the 7th and 8th grades, which is different from the traditional middle school model of student teams based on 4 or 5 subject-defined cohorts (science, math, language arts, social studies, and in some cases foreign language). Similar to the Technology and Vocations electives for this age group, performing arts plays a significant role in supporting student autonomy and interest-based learning. The district requests support for this auditorium, where parents and community members will join the student-driven junior high school performances to strengthen their commitment to the Swansea School District.

*Additionally, a new auditorium would significantly benefit both the students and community. It will provide a versatile space for daily learning and community events, helping to foster educational and local engagement. Benefits for students include: gaining hands-on experience in music, theater, technical production, and public speaking, enhancing creativity, collaboration, and communication skills; performing arts opportunities in an auditorium have been linked to better academic performance and increased school engagement; and students develop confidence, presentation skills, and multidisciplinary teamwork by participating in performances and assemblies within the auditorium. Expanded community and school uses of an auditorium can include the support of community events such as cultural programs, meeting, and emergency uses and offer the school a flexible venue for assemblies, music and performing arts performances, and presentation. Such activities can foster stronger partnerships between the school and the community, making the auditorium a hub for learning and social connectedness. By combining purposeful design and multi-use infrastructure, a school auditorium enriches the educational experience for students and becomes an invaluable asset for the community. As a dedicated space we will avoid the current challenges of our dual-purpose Library / Performance space. Our current combined space does not allow performance rehearsals or other daily learning / community events to take place while other library activities are happening. As noted above, the logistics and time it takes to transform one spatial use into another use discourages many activities from taking place. (Amended 12-08-25)*

*Design Response:* *The preferred solution provides a Music Suite across the hall from a Digital Music Lab noted above in Section 10. These music spaces are also immediately adjacent to the proposed Auditorium for ease of access to the performance space during all scheduled slots within the daily schedule.*

*Locating the Music Suite and Art Rooms along the South and West edge of the school provides opportunities for direct views to nature (wooded area surrounding the school) and good daylighting. Internal spaces, such as the Fabrication Lab / Maker Space will have views through the hallway to the woods and support the core and non-core programs. The Digital Arts and Music Lab (Vocations and Technology) is located between Music and Art.*



*FSHS NYC – Ennead Architects*



*FSHS NYC – Ennead Architects*

## **14. Physical Education and Health Programs**

### **Current:**

The Joseph Case Junior High School physical education and health programs currently use the 2023 Massachusetts Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Curriculum Framework. Physical education follows a curriculum map that involves team games, team sports, lifetime fitness, and leisure activities. This curriculum map was developed years prior. Our typical timeline will have one activity spanning 2 academic cycles. There are 24 physical education periods in a six-day academic cycle, seeing all grade levels and students twice a cycle on consecutive days. There are 497 students in physical education classes at Joseph Case Junior High School.

Students at Joseph Case Junior High School receive health class only in grade seven. There are currently 169 grade seven students. Students meet every day for two terms for one class period, totaling fifty-seven minutes. After the two terms are complete, students transition to visual arts for two terms. Having the students every day helps to build relationships with them. It would be beneficial if a new Joseph Case Junior High School had more available classroom space, additional staff, and a revised schedule, to offer students a health education at the grade six and grade eight levels.

### **Proposed Changes:**

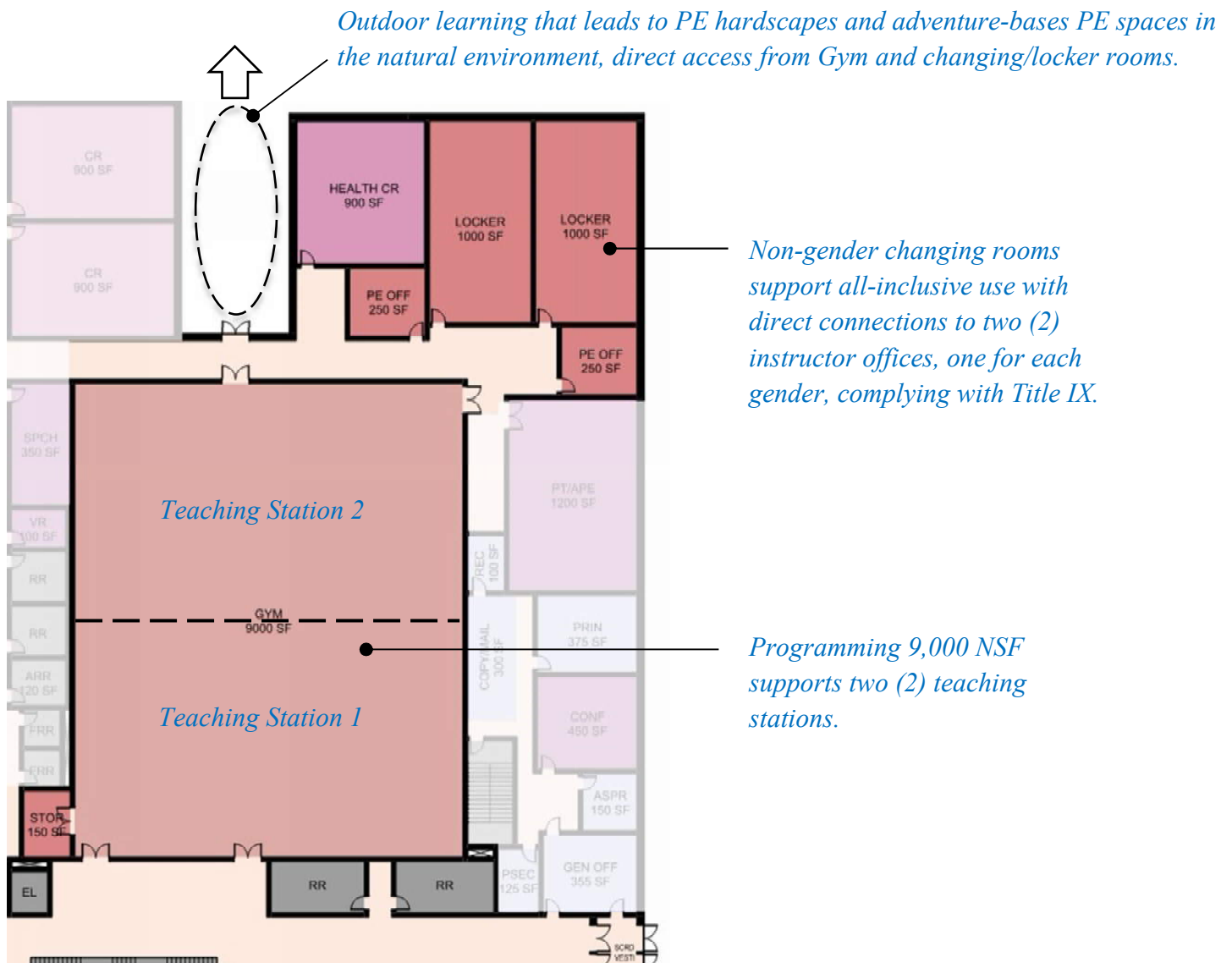
#### **Physical Education:**

Proposed changes for Physical Education classes are as follows:

- A new middle school gymnasium should be able to be partitioned into 2 physical educational spaces, that each support at least a  $\frac{3}{4}$  court for basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, and competitive physical education activities. Features would include a hardwood or synthetic floor with clearly marked courts, adjustable basketball hoops, and removable volleyball nets. The space should include wall padding for safety, retractable bleachers, and a secure storage area for physical education equipment. The gymnasium will be used for physical education classes, intramural sports, and interscholastic competitions.
- Separate gender physical education teacher offices in each gender locker room.
- Separate gender locker rooms with functioning changing stalls and privacy curtains. These locker rooms should also support athletic teams for interscholastic competitions.

- Gender neutral changing/restroom space. The decision was made to plan and design the locker rooms as the gender neutral space for both changing and restroom use. The locker rooms are noted in the Spatial Summary.
- A set of lockers or secure space where students or student-athletes can store their personal belongings while participating in physical education classes or interscholastic competitions.
- A designated storage area to securely store all pertinent equipment for physical education classes and interscholastic competitions.
- Outdoor physical education spaces to enhance student learning and development. Support for outdoor physical education spaces include: enhanced physical activity, nature-based learning, improved social skills, and access to diverse environments. Examples of outdoor physical education activities include: instruction of traditional sports, nature-based activities, fitness lessons and outdoor pursuits.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides a proposed 9,000 NSF gymnasium to support two (2) teaching stations. The gym includes direct access to outdoor adventure and sport-based spaces which get the students outside and introduce new activities that feature teaming, comradery, health, and trust. Immediately across the hall are locker rooms that include changing spaces designed for all-inclusive use, plus teacher offices for each gender that afford changing room oversight.*



## Health Programs:

Facilitating a health class requires various supplies that take up space including numerous lesson supplies and CPR equipment. Incorporating alternate seating options such as wobble stools at the front of the room for students to use. Space is also helpful when trying to plan lessons. Classroom configurations change depending on what the lesson is, so having a large enough classroom space is essential. During the CPR unit, yoga mats are used for stations at the front of the room. Being able to organize the classes into small groups, but having enough space to arrange the desks into a circle to have a group discussion would make for a more cohesive classroom. It might even be helpful to have desks and chairs that are not attached, more flexible, movable furniture. *This is a core curriculum program and is more connected with the science of health and wellness, rather than physical education.* (Amended 12-08-25)

The health classroom is one of the 20 general classrooms that are noted in the Spatial Summary. *As requested by the MSBA,* (Amended 12-08-25) this will be separated out and revised for clarity in the PSR.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides a 900 NSF classroom in the area of both Physical Education and Physical Therapy / Adapted Physical Education (APE) services. The location of this space has a direct connection to the outdoor learning space that leads to the outdoor physical education areas; further emphasizing the direct connection between middle school health topics and nature.*



## **15. Special Education Programs**

Our current facilities and classrooms do not maximize inclusion into the life of the school for eligible students. The elevator does not access all levels of the building, there are no accessible pathways to outdoor spaces, and classroom sizes do not consistently allow for co-teaching practices and small group instruction within general education classrooms.

According to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), special education facilities and classrooms should align with the guidelines listed below. The school district provides facilities and classrooms for eligible students that:

- Maximize the inclusion of such students into the life of the school
- Provide accessibility in order to implement fully each student's IEP
- Are at least equal in all physical respects to the average standards of general education facilities and classroom
- Are given the same priority as general education programs in the allocation of instructional and other space in public schools in order to minimize the separation or stigmatization of eligible students
- Are not identified by signs or other means that stigmatize such students

Small class sizes in junior high school offer numerous benefits. Teachers can provide improved individualized attention, tailoring instruction to each student's needs and offering prompt feedback. Students often achieve better academic outcomes, performing well on tests, and gaining a deeper understanding of subjects. Smaller classes foster stronger teacher-student relationships, enabling educators to connect with students and support their development effectively. Classroom management becomes easier, resulting in fewer disruptions and a more focused environment. Students are more likely to participate actively, as they feel more comfortable and less overshadowed. Smaller classes enhance social and emotional development, allowing students to express themselves without fear of judgment. With class sizes in this range, teachers can implement differentiated instruction, addressing diverse learning styles and needs.

### **Current Special Education Programs:**

Joseph Case Junior High School currently educates 88 students with disabilities within our special education programming. This population represents approximately 18% of the total school population. Joseph Case Junior High School provides special education programming in the least restrictive environment including full inclusion, partial inclusion, and substantially separate placements. The school currently operates two specialized substantially separate classrooms, our JACE and ARCH classrooms.

**ARCH Classroom:** Our ARCH classroom, also known as Alternate Roadway through Joseph Case Junior High School, is a specialized special education substantially separate classroom that provides individualized support for students with autism and intellectual disabilities, focusing on developing academic, communication, and social skills through tailored instruction and strategies. This classroom currently serves nine (9) students and utilizes two adjoining classroom spaces.

**JACE Classroom:** Our JACE classroom, also known as our Joseph Case Junior High School Alternative Center for Education, is a specialized special education substantially separate classroom that provides individualized support for students with social, emotional, behavioral, and/or academic needs. This classroom currently serves five (5) students.

Joseph Case Junior High School also provides substantially separate special education classes in English, mathematics, and academic support (C-box academic-based services). Please see below for current number of

students enrolled in these classes:

- Grade 6 ELA - 9 Students
- Grade 6 Math - 6 Students
- Grade 7 ELA - 4 Students
- Grade 7 Math - 6 Students
- Grade 8 ELA - 7 Students
- Grade 8 Math - 5 Students

We anticipate having three (3) special education classrooms, one for the grade 6 special education classes, one for the grade 7 special education classes, and one for the grade 8 special education classes. Each grade level would have a special education ELA, math, and academic support classes. These special education classrooms would receive direct instruction and services from a Special Education Teacher while taking courses in these three classrooms.

Joseph Case Junior High School also provides inclusion programming in English, mathematics, history, science, world language, and specialist classes such as art, music, band, physical education, computer science, health, and skills courses. The vast majority of special education students participate in one or more inclusion classes. This programming is supported with various models including co-teaching with special education teachers and support from paraprofessionals.

In addition to classroom instruction, Joseph Case Junior High School currently offers direct and consultation services in the following areas:

- Speech and language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Adapted Physical Education
- Reading services
- Counseling services
- Behavior services
- Vision services
- Orientation and mobility services

#### **Existing Program Challenges:**

- Classroom sizes do not allow for effective co-teaching practices and consistent use of small group instruction
- Lack of accessibility for all locations including locker rooms and outdoor spaces
- Lack of space for providing sensory needs and private de-escalation spaces
- Lack of space for special education meetings
- Lack of space for administering evaluations
- Lack of space for providing services in the areas of speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, group counseling, reading, and adapted physical education
- Lack of space for consultation services/meetings and to make confidential phone calls to families
- Lack of space for Behavior Analyst to meet and consult with staff members and provide supervision for Behavior Technician/s
- Currently, one School Adjustment Counselor space is located in a different part of the building. This presents challenges for a counselor to work collaboratively to support student needs when separated from the remaining counselors.

- Locations of specialized special education programs/classrooms are currently located on the second floor of the school building. This presents additional challenges with evacuation procedures for students with disabilities.
- Lack of storage space for special education equipment
- Lack of adequate space for Special Education Coordinator office
- Lack of private space for students who need additional support with toileting needs
- Lack of small-group classroom space for special education inclusion teachers to pull students for testing/other accommodations on a daily basis
- Lack of space within ARCH/JACE to incorporate life skills, such as a kitchen

### **Current Specialized Programs and Collaborative Spaces/Programs:**

ARCH Classroom: Our ARCH classroom, also known as Alternate Roadway through Joseph Case Junior High School, is a specialized special education substantially separate classroom that provides individualized support for students with autism and intellectual disabilities, focusing on developing academic, communication, and social skills through tailored instruction and strategies. This classroom currently serves nine (9) students and utilizes two adjoining classroom spaces.

JACE Classroom: Our JACE classroom, also known as our Joseph Case Junior High School Alternative Center for Education, is a specialized special education substantially separate classroom that provides individualized support for students with social, emotional, behavioral, and/or academic needs. This classroom currently serves five (5) students.

Swansea Public Schools currently does not house any Collaborative spaces/programs.

### **Proposed Programs/Services:**

- Dedicated space for service providers - academic support, physical therapy, occupational therapy, adapted physical education, speech and language therapy, reading, counseling (individual and group)
- Inclusion teachers each have their own small classroom/workspace
- Special education meeting space
- Space for administering special education evaluations
- Special Education Coordinator and Behavior Analyst Offices
- Sensory and de-escalation space in close proximity to ARCH/JACE
- Storage space for special education equipment
- Classroom size that allows for co-teaching practices and small group instruction
- Specialized special education classrooms located on the ground floor with calming spaces
- Close proximity of ARCH/JACE to a life skills classroom/area
- Accessibility to all indoor and outdoor spaces for all students
- All counselors located in a centralized area of the building
- Space for consultation meetings and confidential phone calls to families
- Private space/restroom for students that need additional support with toileting needs
- Stair edge marking that is designed to make the edges of steps more visible and safer to navigate for students and employees with vision impairments
- Integrated hearing assistive systems to support students and employees with hearing impairments

### **Continued Programs/Services:**

All current programs/services as described above will continue in the proposed project.

### **Removed Programs:**

No current programs are planned to be removed in the proposed project.

**Added or Enhanced Programs:**

By providing the following improvements, Joseph Case Junior High School will better support the needs of its students and staff members:

- Spaces for speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, reading services, and adapted physical education are not shared spaces to allow for scheduling that is based on what is best for student schedules and not based on availability of space. These spaces should be large enough to provide adequate space for small groups of students and safe space for the physical activities that occur in physical therapy, adapted physical education, and occupational therapy.
- A designated area for special education meetings and space for administering special education evaluations.
- An office space for the Special Education Coordinator and Behavior Analyst. These spaces are accounted for within the Spatial Summary.
- Sensory and de-escalation spaces for students requiring additional support.
- Life skills space(s) for students with life skills goals (kitchen with sink/running water, storage, counter space) as part of the ARCH space. This space is accounted for within the Spatial Summary.
- Classrooms for specialized special education programs should include air conditioning due to medical needs of students.
- Storage for special education equipment.
- General education classroom sizes that facilitate co-teaching practices and small group instruction.
- Full accessibility to both indoor and outdoor spaces for all students.
- A centralized location for all counselors within the building to promote collaboration and provide more flexibility with supporting student needs.
- Space for consultation meetings and confidential phone calls with families.
- Private space/restroom for students that need additional support with toileting needs or require a higher level of supervision should be located near our specialized special education programs.
- Special education classrooms should not be clustered together, but rather located within areas that house general education classes.
- Consideration should be given to the proximity of the health services office, guidance suite, and ARCH program to each other to enhance accessibility and coordination for students and staff.

These considerations will enhance the delivery of services and ensure a supportive, respectful, and inclusive environment for all students.

**Moved Programs/Services:**

No programs/services are proposed to be moved from within the district as a result of the proposed project.

**Coordinated Program Review:****Last Coordinated Program Review:**

Swansea Public Schools

Tiered Focused Monitoring Report

Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan

Date of Final Report: June 30, 2023

Criterion: SE 55 - Special education facilities and classrooms

Rating: Partially Implemented

Description of Current Issue: Facility observations, a review of documents, and staff interviews indicated that the location of the Case Alternative Center for Education (CACE), which serves students with

disabilities at the Joseph Case High School, does not minimize the separation of these students or maximize the inclusion of students into the life of the school. Specifically, the CACE classroom is located on the second floor that does not include general education classrooms.

**Coordinated Program Review Status/Remedy:**

LEA Outcome: Swansea Public Schools will ensure that the location for the Case Alternative Center for Education (CACE), which serves students with disabilities at the Joseph Case High School, minimizes the separation of these students and maximizes the inclusion of students into the life of the school. Specifically, the CACE classroom will be located amongst general education classrooms.

The above language is referencing a high school program that is located at our high school and will remain at our high school. There is a separate Jr. High School JACE substantially separate classroom for special education students with social-emotional needs. Currently, there are five students who utilize this space for special education courses/services.

Action Plan: By July 30, 2023, the district will provide a floor plan indicating the proposed CACE classroom location for the 2023-2024 school year. By September 11, 2023, a representative of the Department will conduct an onsite visit of the Joseph Case High School to verify the new location of the CACE program.

Success Metric: By September 2023 and beyond, Swansea Public Schools will ensure that the location of the CACE program at the Joseph Case High School minimizes the separation of students and maximizes the inclusion of students into the life of the school.

Evidence:

Updated 2023-2024 floor plan  
Onsite verification visit

Measurement Mechanism: The Special Education Administrator and building principals will review locations of special education classrooms in each school annually to ensure that the classrooms minimize the separation of students with disabilities and maximize the inclusion of the students into the life of the school.

Completion Timeframe: 09/11/2023

Status Update: Prior to the start of the 2023-2024 School Year, this identified area has been fully implemented.

**Collaborative Spaces/Programs:**

Joseph Case Junior High School currently does not house any Collaborative spaces/programs. There are currently no plans to add this space as a part of the proposed project.

**Special Education Day School Programs:**

Swansea Public Schools are members of South Coast Educational Collaborative and Bi-County Collaborative. At this time, Swansea Public Schools does not plan to include space in the proposed project for a Collaborative to utilize.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides a distributed collection of special education spaces within the learning environment and connected to core academic spaces. Self-contained programs such as JACE and*

*ARCH are provided with support space within the confines of the program, such as restrooms and a sensory space.*

*The ARCH program includes the Life Skills environment and is located on the Ground Level for ease of access from the Main Entrance of the school. The Ground Level also is where the Nurse Suite is located for easy access to the ARCH program.*

*ARCH includes space for learning and developing life skills utilizing a small apartment style set-up, allowing students to learn from peers performing daily tasks. This area is separated from a learning space to limit distractions. The separation will be as opaque or open as desired to accommodate the desired level of visual connectivity within the entire space.*



*Life Skills Learning Space – Steel Case Concept*

*JACE is directly above ARCH on the upper level, within the upper-level learning neighborhood.*

*Small Group Rooms are located within the learning neighborhoods, one on each of the three (3) levels; same for the co-teaching classroom, so each of these spaces are easily accessible on each floor.*

*Small pullout space is provided on each floor level located between two core academic classrooms, with access from either classroom or the hallway. The intent is to provide a pull-out space without leaving the learning neighborhood.*

*Specialists and professionals have offices located in the two-story Admin/Counseling suite. This allows easy access for visitors arriving at the Main Entrance and for staff to share information about student progress and IEPs, also while sharing resources beyond those dedicated to Special Education such as the nurse and counselors.*

*Speech is located within the learning neighborhood and includes a viewing room for parents or specialists to watch student progress and render assessments without placing unnecessary anxiety on the student.*

*Occupational Therapy is located within the learning neighborhood for ease of access and use by all special education students, regardless of IEPs or which special education programs they attend.*



*Occupational Therapy – JMT Architecture*



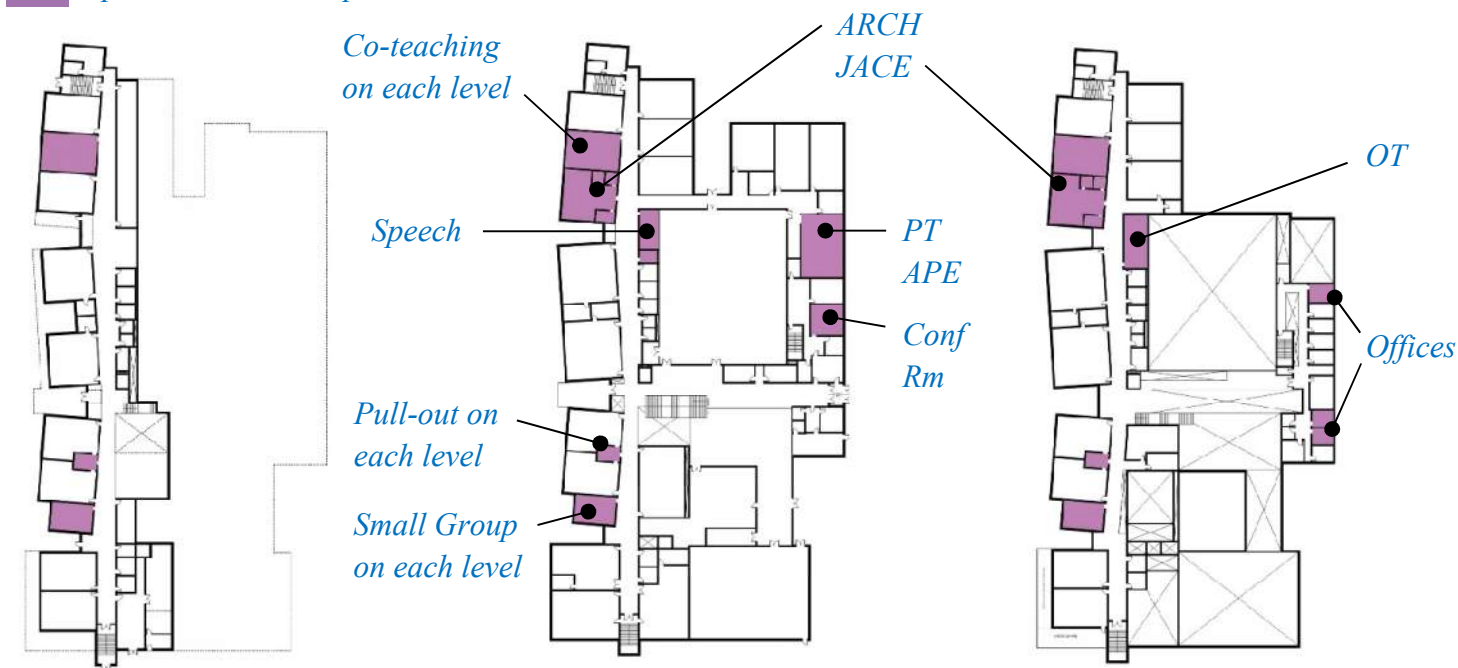
*Occupational Therapy – JMT Architecture*

*Physical Therapy / Adapted Physical Education is a dedicated therapy space that is not part of the Physical Education program. Students on IEPs will benefit from the close proximity to the changing rooms and outdoor connection, while also feeling part of the student body that travels to the physical education portion of the learning environment for physical activities – See Section 14 above.*



*Physical Therapy / Adaptive PE Space Example – Chiropractic Ergonomics Design*

## Special Education Spaces



*Person-assist restrooms, and other all-inclusive accommodations, will be provided on each level. These will accommodate all students and staff with assistance needs to satisfy federal 504 regulations for accessible spaces for all.*

## 16. Vocational and Technology Programs

### a. Non-Chapter 74 Programming

There are no distinct Chapter 74 programs currently at Joseph Case Junior High School. The science, technology, and visual arts programs singularly explore skills associated with engineering, design, and visual arts. It is proposed with the new building that these programs be enhanced through collaboration between these domains and expanded to provide students with a robust STEM/STEAM educational experience.

Refer to the Science, Technology Instruction Policies and Program Requirements, and Visual Arts sections for proposed STEM/STEAM programming.

Displaying the inner workings of the school, such as views into operating mechanical spaces, sustainability interactive display screens, exposed infrastructure, exposed structure, and other building system and material expressions will provide our students with real world examples of technology and engineering applications.

### b. Chapter 74 Programming - NOT APPLICABLE

## 17. Transportation Policies

### Current:

Swansea Public Schools provides cost-free transportation to all students residing in Swansea, regardless of the

distance between their home address and Joseph Case Junior High School. Currently, 17 buses serve students attending Joseph Case Junior High School. Buses are simultaneously used to transport both high school students and junior high school students. There are also currently three (3) vans providing specialized transportation with the possibility of four (4) in the future that require additional space for loading and unloading passengers.

### **Proposed Changes:**

There are no planned changes to the district's transportation policies. However, the design must accommodate space for multiple buses during arrival and dismissal, as well as additional vans for specialized transportation needs. Additionally, sufficient space is required to manage the high volume of parent drop-offs and pick-ups in personal vehicles. A comprehensive plan should be developed to ensure the safe dismissal of students walking home, riding in vans or school buses, or being picked up by personal vehicles. To enhance safety and efficiency, separate designated areas for each mode of transportation should be considered for both arrivals and dismissals. Adequate parking must be provided to accommodate families attending school events and extracurricular activities, ensuring that traffic flow and emergency access at the school remain unobstructed. Consideration should also be given to providing a covered student drop-off area to ensure safety during inclement weather.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides dedicated bus queuing space away from parent queuing space. Parking closest to the Main Entrance accommodates visitors and accessible spaces with dedicated junior high school faculty and staff spaces located within walking distance of the Main Entrance.*

## **18. Functional and Spatial Relationships**

### **Preferred Educational Adjacencies:**

Included in the table below are the District's preferred educational adjacencies and the explanation and rationale for the adjacencies. Consideration relative to general education, special education, administrative offices, student guidance and support services, nursing services, related arts, and cafeteria spaces are addressed.

| <b>Preferred Educational Adjacencies</b>                                                                                                                                      | <b>Explanation/Rationale</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adapted physical education space is in close proximity to the gymnasium.                                                                                                      | This will allow for sharing of equipment and materials.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Special education/504 plan meeting space located near entrance.                                                                                                               | This will minimize visitors walking through the building.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Specialized special education classrooms with calming spaces.                                                                                                                 | This supports ease of access and evacuation procedures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Centralized Counseling Center with individual support space located to promote and encourage collaboration within the counseling team, teachers, and students.                | This approach will foster collaboration, enhance flexibility in supporting student needs, and ensure counselors have convenient access to additional support when required                                                                                                                            |
| Classrooms for specialized special education programs should be located on the ground floor in proximity to exits, nursing services, a private restroom, and speech services. | Classrooms for specialized special education programs should be located on the ground floor near exits, nursing services, and a private restroom to ensure accessibility, promote safety, provide timely medical support, maintain privacy, minimize transitions, and enhance emergency preparedness. |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sensory and de-escalation space in close proximity to ARCH/JACE classrooms.                                                                                                                                                                                        | This will ensure safer transitions for students who may become dysregulated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Special education classrooms should not be clustered together, but rather located within areas that house general education classes. Each grade level would have a special education classroom located near the general education classes for that specific grade. | This supports best practices for inclusion and alignment with special education regulations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Related arts, STEM and Music classrooms centrally located within the building.                                                                                                                                                                                     | This would make student transitions and ease of accessibility more efficient as all grade levels and students would need to access these classrooms.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Visual arts, music, and technology classrooms should be located in close proximity to each other.                                                                                                                                                                  | Having these classrooms close to each other would allow for enhanced cross-curricular activities, including the shared use of resources, and teacher planning for such activities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Community access to the gymnasium and performance spaces should be located near an exterior wall, or accessible from the main entrance.                                                                                                                            | This will create ease for access to the public for performances and events, while allowing for greater security in the remainder of the building. Additionally, consideration for the proximity of a performance space could provide opportunities for community use of the space.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Grade level core academic classes located on the same floor or wing of the building.                                                                                                                                                                               | Keeping grade-level classes adjacent to each other offers several advantages including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● transitions between classes</li> <li>● teacher collaboration and planning</li> <li>● social cohesion and peer support</li> <li>● improved classroom management</li> <li>● facilitating group work and collaboration</li> <li>● efficient use of resources</li> <li>● school culture and cohesion</li> <li>● enhanced safety and supervision</li> <li>● scheduling flexibility for special programming needs</li> <li>● encourage inclusivity and diverse interaction</li> </ul> |
| Cafeteria located near outdoor space that could be utilized for open air eating space.                                                                                                                                                                             | Outdoor open air eating space can also be used for outdoor classroom space.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

The existing school, partially constructed in 1927 and partially in 1950 does not provide functional space that accommodates the programs delivered today due to all the reasons set forth in the SOI and in the Existing Conditions Assessment of the PDP submission. Spatial Relationships and Adjacencies are also not supportive of student and staff needs. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Specialists working from modified closets
- Classrooms significantly below spatial MSBA standards and lack usable space for anything other than rows of desks tightly packed into a room
- Science labs not equipped or capable of being equipped with needed sinks, infrastructure, storage, and project areas

- APE / Physical Therapy space in a basement far away from other special education and core academic areas
- Special education spaces, not equipped or sized to accommodate the students and needed equipment
- Art and STE-Technology Classroom are in another building across the parking lot

Additional consideration should be given to have the administrative offices located at the front of the school building, with ample space for school administration, administrative support, school resource officer, and meeting and collaborative spaces. Placing the administrative offices at the front of the school building is imperative for the following reasons:

- Accessibility - The front of the building is the most accessible and visible part of the school. Placing administrative offices here would make it easier for visitors and other pertinent personnel to access the school.
- Security - Easier monitoring of who enters and exits the building is paramount to ensure building safety.
- Centralized Communication - Administrative offices are typically the hub for communication and coordination. Having the administrative offices at the front of the building will make it more efficient to communicate and coordinate with staff, students, and visitors.
- Meeting and Collaboration Spaces - Having additional meeting and collaborative spaces housed within the administrative suite will reduce traffic throughout the school and ensure interactions between administration, staff, and visitors does not interfere with the instruction and learning.

Overall, the administrative offices placement enhances functionality, safety and efficiency in school operations.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides all of the above as described throughout this report. Art, Music, and STEM spaces are closely adjacent and centrally located on the mid-level of the three levels for ease of access from any level and for adjacency to the Auditorium. The learning neighborhoods are organized with distributed special education located within the shared core academic area.*

*Community spaces, including the Gym, Cafeteria, and Auditorium are located near the Main Entrance for ease of access and security control of the learning environment after hours, creating a One-Main-Door solution for safety and security. All community spaces and educational spaces are organized around the central spine that makes up the Heart of the School which starts at the front door and ends at the epi center of the learning neighborhood.*

### **Preferred Site Adjacencies:**

Joseph Case Junior High School supports two soccer teams, two basketball teams, a volleyball team, a cross-country team, and both baseball and softball teams. Students also participate in the school's unified sports programs which include basketball, bocce ball, and unified fitness. Some students also participate in MIAA waived sports programs at Joseph Case High School including field hockey, golf, cheerleading, basketball, baseball, and softball. The sports waivers are determined annually on a need basis.

Currently, the soccer teams practice on a designated parcel of land located in the back of Joseph Case Junior High School. This land is also utilized by Joseph Case Junior High School students for physical education classes, weather permitting, during the school year. Baseball and softball teams walk to the Swansea Memorial Park to practice and participate in games. The Swansea Memorial Park is open to the public and home to the Swansea Little League.

In order to support the needs of the students, staff, families, and community members, an outdoor complex with multiple fields and structures is necessary. An outdoor complex should include, but is not limited to, the

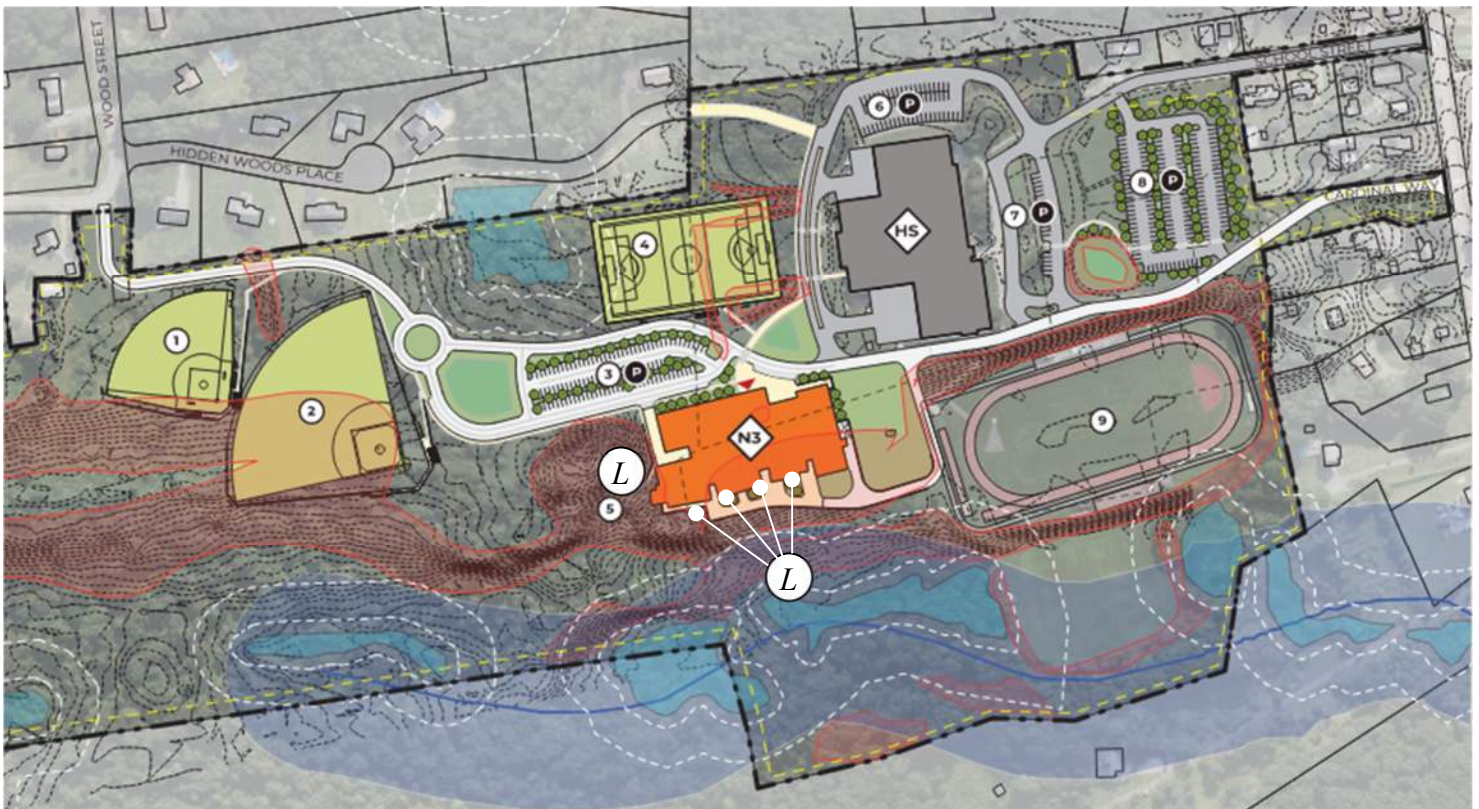
following amenities:

- Outdoor playfields/practice multi-purpose, multi-surface fields
- Hard surface area with basketball hoops for all types of ball play
- Outdoor walking/jogging space with a fitness trail
  - The outdoor fitness trail can extend from the Swansea Memorial Park
- Outdoor equipment storage facilities to store the various Joseph Case Junior High School various teams' equipment and materials
- Bathrooms that can be accessed from outside the school building

In addition to the general fields and amenities, a new junior high school should capitalize on outdoor education. The goal of the outdoor education space is for students to experience learning beyond the classroom walls. Students will be able to engage in concrete learning experiences throughout the school campus. Use of a fitness trail and outdoor gardens or greenhouse structures provide students with real life, hands-on, authentic learning experiences. Observances of wildlife on the adjacent conservation land would also provide students with the opportunity to view the impact wildlife has on the local ecology and environment.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides fields and outdoor space to support the community and educational needs. Outdoor learning takes place on two (2) of the three (3) levels to encourage outdoor use for multiple learning and common area spaces. The site can accommodate a running trail and other amenities to encourage fitness and wellbeing for students and the community. Restrooms within the changing / locker room area can be accessed from outside to support outdoor physical education.*

*The preferred site provides for wetland, upland, and wooded habitats for students to learn within the specific Swansea environment.*



1. Softball Field
2. Baseball Field
3. Junior High School Parking
4. Multi-sport Field
5. Steep Topography Area
6. Existing High School Faculty Parking to remain
7. Existing High School parking and drop-off to remain
8. Relocated High School student parking
9. Existing Stadium to remain
- HS: Existing Joseph Case High School to Remain
- N3: New Joseph Case Junior High School

*Outdoor dining will be located adjacent to the Main Entrance, directly outside the Dining Space.*

(L) *Outdoor Learning Areas. Adjacent to Gym will be outdoor learning space, hardscape PE and Adventure-based PE space*

## **19. Security and Visual Access Requirements**

Swansea Public Schools physical and operational requirements regarding security and access are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure the safety of everyone in our educational community. Emergency procedures are a collaborative effort between school administration, police, fire and emergency medical services. Joseph Case Junior High School maintains a crisis manual that outlines all of the emergency procedures in place at the school. This includes a Medical Emergency Response Plan that was updated in the summer of 2024.

With one section of the building nearly one hundred years old and the other built in the 1950's, many of the safety and security aspects of a modern school are missing. Secure school design is among the highest priorities of any school district. With the construction of a new junior high school, the following should be considered to ensure the utmost safety and security:

- Access control systems
  - Utilizing keycards, key fobs, or biometric identification to restrict entry to authorized individuals only, with advanced systems allowing for customized access levels depending on user roles and time of day.
- Video surveillance
  - High-quality security cameras strategically placed both inside and outside the building to monitor activity and provide visual evidence in case of incidents.
- Perimeter security
  - A secure perimeter with fences, gates, and controlled access points to limit unauthorized entry to the school grounds.
- Secure entry vestibule
  - A controlled entry area at the main entrance where visitors must be screened and checked in before gaining access to the rest of the building.
- Visitor management system
  - A process for registering and tracking visitors, including requiring identification and notifying staff of their presence.

- Door locking mechanisms
  - High-quality, robust door locks on all exterior and interior doors, including classroom doors, with options for lockdown capabilities.
- Communication systems
  - Integrated communication systems allowing for quick and effective communication between staff, students, and emergency responders.
- Lighting
  - Proper lighting throughout the school grounds, especially in key areas like parking lots and entrances, to improve visibility and deter criminal activity.
- Clear sightlines
  - Incorporating more windows (in some cases, entire exterior walls, to maximize visibility of a school's surroundings. Hallways designed with sightlines in mind. Including wide corridors to help teachers and administration observe the students and identify if anything is out of the ordinary.

*Design Response: The preferred solution will provide these systems as outlined in the Basis of Design of major systems.*

## **20. Typical Day and Week in the Life of a Student**

Students arrive at school, either by bus, car, walking, or riding bicycles. In order to help reduce traffic congestion, students are allowed to be dropped off beginning at 7:15 a.m. These students report to the cafeteria where they are supervised and may choose to eat breakfast. Buses are unloaded at 7:25 a.m., when the majority of teachers begin their work day. Students report to their lockers and then to their homeroom. Students who arrive by bus and who are dropped off after 7:15 a.m., may eat breakfast during this time.

Following a thirteen minute home room period, students report to period one. Periods one through three are fifty seven minutes long and there is a four minute passing period between each period. Each student is assigned a locker adjacent to their home room where they may store their belongings. Students are allowed to access their lockers when they arrive in the morning, after period two, after period four, and at the end of the day. Students are able to transition through the hallways independently, but staff are positioned at their classroom doors to supervise the transitions.

The time between classes allows students to access lockers / student storage areas rather than force the students to carry backpacks and other items all day as they travel between classes. The time also accommodates avoiding unnecessary pressure to travel between classes while also having to retrieve an item from a locker or another class. The travel distance will be addressed utilizing space diagrams within the Designer's Response portion of the updated District's Educational Program and provided in the PSR Section 3.3.4.1 Educational Program.

Students eat lunch during period four, grade six students eat first, before their period four class. Grade seven students report to period four for a twenty-five minute period, they then eat lunch, then report back to period four for another twenty-five minute period. Grade eight has a fifty minute period four before reporting to the cafeteria for lunch. All lunch periods are twenty-five minutes in duration. Following period four, students have two more class periods, each of fifty-seven minutes.

Buses are shared with the high school creating a challenge at student dismissal. There is a designated area where students who are picked up by car report. This area is supervised by a staff member. Half of the buses are waiting for students at dismissal. Students who ride on these buses report directly to the bus at dismissal time. The other half of the buses begin at the high school. Students who ride these buses report either to the cafeteria

or the gym to wait in a designated area until their bus arrives. Once buses are loaded at our school and at the high school, they switch locations, with the buses that start here going to pick up high school students and the buses that start at the high school coming here to pick up the remainder of our students.

Joseph Case Junior High School offers a wide variety of extracurricular activities and sports teams. Many students remain at school at the end of the day to participate in these programs.

*Design Response: The preferred solution provides an educational environment that will enhance the student experience and respond to future adaptation of spatial use. The use of vision glass, murals, and color will further enhance the Joseph Case Junior High School community, values, and sense of place for all students and community members. Spaces within the common areas will be designed to present and display student work and achievements, as well as active learning in real-time. Sustainability and wellness will be displayed, and the physical school will be designed as a learning tool. Visual cues, finish selection and even views into mechanical spaces all help students experience the operation and tracking of energy and wellness performance.*



*Gibbs School – Finegold Alexander Architects*

## **21. Medical Suite**

The Health Services Department plays a vital role in supporting the well-being of both students and staff at Joseph Case Junior High School. The design of the nursing office should aim to improve efficiency, accessibility, and safety, ensuring the delivery of high-quality healthcare services. Areas of focus include addressing layout deficiencies, upgrading medical infrastructure, and enhancing privacy and safety standards. Integrating modern healthcare technology and improving accessibility is also paramount. One of the primary challenges with the current nursing office is the inadequate space for patient care. Current data from Swansea Comprehensive Plan (2024) indicates that the student population at Joseph Case Junior High School has remained steady over the past five years, with no indication of decline. During this same period, however, there has been a significant increase in students with chronic illnesses. According to the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention, more than 40% of school aged children and adolescents have at least one chronic health condition. These statistics only highlight the urgent need for an updated health services office.

The existing space is outdated and no longer meets the growing healthcare needs of the student body. The current office layout lacks sufficient space to accommodate the rising number of students who require care. All students are cared for in a shared space, with a separate, singular room for the sicker patients or for those with more private needs. The nurse sees 60 students a day, on average, requiring adequate waiting space, restrooms, and cot space. As well as a separate space that can be used as a quarantine space until a family member arrives at school to dismiss the student.

The new building project must include an expanded examination area, allowing for additional exam beds, and create distinct areas for triage and waiting areas. A new private, multifunctional room will serve as a hygienic space for students needing assistance with personal care, an isolation area for infectious illnesses, and a private space for mental health and other sensitive medical needs.

Medical infrastructure should also be upgraded to better support the management of chronic illnesses. The installation of durable, state-of-the-art equipment will allow for improved care delivery. Accessibility will be a key focus, with plans to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards through the addition of accessible examination tables, wider hallways, updated signage, and fully compliant restrooms and entrances. Inclusion of a Hoyer lift in one of the restrooms should be considered.

The health office should be in a central location and have direct access to the outside. The current health office is on the opposite side of the building from the main entrance and the accessible entrance. Current evacuation of patients requires a walk down the 400-foot hallway, providing many opportunities for bystander onlooking and extended evacuation times during a medical emergency. This direct access would significantly improve emergency response times by providing direct access for ambulances and medical transport while avoiding crowded school areas. Creating this direct access will also enhance privacy by allowing students or staff to be transported without drawing attention, maintaining their dignity during emergencies. Additionally, this direct access would support students with disabilities by providing safe, unobstructed access for specialized transport vehicles.

Technology integration will further enhance care, with plans for new vital signs wall mount stations, power operated changing table, automatic doors, and fireproof filing systems for student health records. Additionally, infection control will be enhanced through improved ventilation, handwashing stations in treatment areas, and dedicated isolation spaces to minimize the risk of cross-contamination or illness transmission.

*Design Response: The preferred solution locates the Nurse Suite next to the Main Entrance and the cafeteria. There is a door directly out of the suite for students who need to leave without going back through the school environment. Spaces will accommodate resting areas, private exams, waiting, and a secure nurse office. Restrooms will accommodate assist-type equipment and storage will be provided to achieve the serving of 60 students per day. The infrastructure will provide the technology necessary to meet the needs of the school to triage students and treat, observe, or send home. The suite is directly across the Main Entrance from the Admin area, enabling the nurse to greet parents on arrival and/or make arrangements with the administration team to send student home or to other facilities. Students who need medication at lunch or throughout the day, including as they arrive and depart will have easy access.*



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