Educational Suitability Summary Report

Clifton Career Development School

Date: 10/21/2016

The Clifton Career Development School, located in northeast Austin, is a school focused on giving students with disabilities instruction in Career and Technical Education. This facility is aged and has some overall accessibility issues that hinder access for its student population. The main concern expressed by the principal is the overall lack of space for the expanding CTE programs that they wish to offer their students. Other high priorities are increasing security for visitor events and improving the accessibility issues throughout the campus.

The interview was attended by the principal, the vice principal, and two district CTE representatives. When asked what spaces in the facility are inappropriate or inadequate for their needs, they pinpointed several issues.

The campus has some specific concerns for the spaces outside of the main campus building. The greenhouse is showing wear, and the aisles are not ADA compliant for wheelchairbound students. The principal expressed interest in a new, fully-accessible greenhouse classroom/lab for student instruction to better support the existing greenhouse space. Currently adjacent to the greenhouse, is the horticulture classroom in an outdated, deteriorating portable. This classroom is showing heavy wear and the wood ramp leading to it is deteriorating, creating an uneven path for wheelchair access. Also at the rear of the campus site, is the ag barn. The campus desires appropriately connected drainage for the washing area of the barn, improved vehicle access, and adding ADA access to this facility. The staff also desire additional covered storage space for related equipment. The greenhouse, ag barn, and tool sheds lack appropriate ADA access. Additionally, the parking was identified as an issue for the school during large events. There are expected changes to the adjacent street that will remove on-street parking, which the staff predict will increase their parking issues for large gatherings. The parking area near the greenhouse is also reported as needing improvements.

There are some hardware issues, narrow door openings, and inappropriate counter heights in terms of ADA compliance throughout the facility. The restrooms were a topic of particular concern. Many of the restrooms are not ADA compliant including those in the nurse’s office, the laundry facility, teacher work room, and within the classrooms. The only accessible restroom is on the upper level of the campus. The finishes of the school are also showing signs of wear. The flooring in the health sciences rooms have permanent rust stains and are reported by the faculty as needing asbestos abatement.

The staff identified several areas in the facility that are being repurposed for different uses. The former cafeteria and gym in this school are being used as a large meeting space and a culinary program respectively. The principal expressed that the stage in the cafeteria is never used and could be removed and redesigned for another purpose. The cafeteria space needs an updated, integrated sound system and acoustic improvements for the numerous events held in this space. The culinary café area is the former gym, and it lacks natural light. The accordion partition between the cafeteria and culinary
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café is reported as never being used, and a permanent wall would be preferred by the staff. There were also reports that these two spaces experience heating and cooling issues when both in use. In the culinary kitchen, some of the equipment needs upgrades and the venthood is undersized.

The former woodshop has been converted into the ag mechanics classroom. The campus wants to increase their welding opportunities, but their space lacks the appropriate ventilation and equipment desired. The CTE specialist suggested a possibility of creating a building expansion that would increase space for welding equipment and reduce the length of the current loading dock. The teacher work room and office space in the building is also limited. The animal sciences room is reported as used for meetings when not being used. The adjacent classroom space has been repurposed as office space for 6 specialists. This area has a mix of furniture and limited storage space. The furniture throughout the school is a mix of old and new pieces. The technology in the facility is outdated, and some older projectors and tethered innovation stations were observed. The administration area is in need of cosmetic repairs and improved configuration of spaces. The nurse’s area is undersized, does not have direct access to an icemaker, and lacks an accessible restroom and shower area.

When asked what programs or spaces are desired on campus, those in attendance expressed that a cosmetology addition is a top desire. The staff expressed that they have the demand to easily support a new cosmetology program immediately on their campus. The campus has available site area to place such an addition, and the CTE specialist expressed interest in providing input to the design of such a space. She mentioned that she envisions this facility would have three classrooms, restrooms, and dressing and changing areas. Overall, updated and accessible dressing areas are desired at the school. The current dressing room area in the school is outdated and has been repurposed as a storage area.

There were also some security issues expressed by those in attendance. It was reported that the district uses the cafeteria space for large meetings which brings visitors to this facility often. However, one concern associated with this use, is the mixing of visitors and students. The restroom for this area of the building is shared with learning spaces which is a safety and security concern. The principal expressed interest in having separate restrooms for visitors and students, and having the ability to secure the learning spaces from the public spaces. The video camera coverage on campus is minimal, and it is reported that the footage is of poor quality. Additionally, the principal expressed interest in adding two Raptor systems to the campus, both at the plant sales area of the greenhouse and the culinary area. An additional safety concern is the lack of private access between the culinary classroom and the culinary kitchen. This program needs a secure, private access for students to use these spaces most effectively.

When considering possible additions or renovations to the campus, the staff expressed openness to changes that would increase space on campus for their programs. The hottest issue facing this campus expressed by the staff is the lack of space for their expanding program offerings. Other top concerns include the security concerns with students and visitors mixing and the facility’s accessibility issues, especially in the restrooms.
Photo 1. Ag Barn
Photo 2. Horticulture
Portable, Deteriorating Ramp
Photo 3. Offices in Former Classroom
Photo 4. Nurse Room is Undersized and Lacks ADA Restroom
Photo 5. Floors Show Wear, Counter Heights are Not Accessible
Photo 6. Teacher Workroom Space is Limited and Poorly Configured
Photo 7. Campus Lacks Secure Vestibule Entry
Photo 8. Former Dressing Rooms Now Used for Storage
Photo 10. Campus Restrooms Are Not Accessible
Photo 11. Greenhouse is Not ADA Compliant
Photo 12. Cafeteria Used For Large Events, Need Acoustic and Security Improvements