

August 18, 2006

## Initial schematic designs for the new elementary school in Blaine are shared

At the August 8, 2006 School Board meeting, Wold Architects and Engineers provided the first look at a schematic design for a new K-3 elementary school to be build near 125th Street and Cloud Drive in Blaine. The school will open in the fall of 2008.

Greg Dehler, of Wold, presented schematic designs of the new school. He said the design was the result of input provided by the community and staff Elementary Design Team. The team toured elementary schools in the Twin Cities area for design idea concepts and have met for throughout the spring and summer.

Dr. Don Helmstetter thanked Joe Packey, Erik Jacobs, Pam Smith-Owens, Jodi Lichtsinn, Ann Baldwin, Colleen Pederson, Brenda Sandberg, Caroline King, Jodine Jones, Dean Downs, Mike Callahan, Claudia Hagberg, Jerelyne Nemanich, and Jean Nolby for their time, commitment, and great insight.

*The design was based upon "commitments" developed by the Elementary Design team that included:*

- Safety and security are top priorities. We will meet or exceed all state and federal guidelines.
- The designs will focus on student and adult learning to promote quality education.
- The atmosphere will be friendly, welcoming, calm, warm, and bright.
- Natural light will be used as much as possible.
- The schools will maximize flexible and adaptable age-appropriate learning environments.



- The school will meet the needs of our diverse community.
- The school will support parent and volunteer involvement.
- The design will promote ease of navigation throughout the schools and sites.
- The school will be a source of great district and community pride.
- The school will have great value as a district and community resource.

### *More details about the emerging design:*

- The new school will be about 85,000 square feet in size and accommodate up to 750 students
- The site is located just south of 125th Street on Cloud Drive in Blaine. An analysis is being done of the parking, playfield orientation, and building orientation.
- Representatives from Wold have met with City of Blaine officials to talk about set backs, zoning requirements, and other city ordinances.
- The diagram presented is a two-story building with classrooms arranged in clusters of 4 or 6, organized around a shared resource area.
- The cafeteria also functions as a multifunctional commons space.

- Teaching spaces have been arranged to maximize the exposure to exterior lighting.
- The building has been designed to accommodate the potential for future growth.

Superintendent Helmstetter said that the new school project schedule continues to be on track with a projected completion date of August 2008. Once details are fine-tuned and City of Blaine's criteria has been met, construction on the new school can begin.

Members of the Elementary Design Team who were in the audience at the August 8 School Board comment on the proposed design.

### *Community-staff comments included:*

- The team toured other schools for safety and security concepts. The needs of students who have special needs were considered in the design as was a centralized media center and multi-functionality of the cafeteria space. Clustered classrooms with breakout areas will benefit students.
- Built-in flexibility can change with student needs. The architects used input from the team and modified the design until the team was satisfied with the design plan.
- In addition to student needs, the group considered the community use and staff development needs in the development of the design.

**Schematic drawings  
and other information from  
the presentation follow  
on the next slides.**

