Why can't you keep using West Learning Center?

West Learning Center, and West Elementary School before it, has served Worthington area residents well since Dwight Eisenhower was President in 1956. As community needs evolved, it, like most school buildings, underwent additions, updates and renovations. Long before the current school board and administration, the building was earmarked for decommissioning due to structural and other long-term maintenance deficiencies, but because the district has consistently had need for the space, and since West continued to be safe for students, the district chose to save money by continuing to use West Learning Center and not leasing or building new space. Now, however, the time has come for it to be closed. Staff and students have done a marvelous job over time making a building with many deficiencies work, but maintenance costs are now too high and there are too many operational interruptions due to emergency repairs.

A full-facility needs evaluation was completed by ICS Consulting. The evaluation is below.

November 21, 2017

Memorandum

To: John Landgaard, Superintendent

From: Chris Ziemer, ICS Consulting

Subject: West Learning Center Facility Needs Evaluation

Site:

1) Existing bituminous pavement within the site limits requires full replacement (i.e. removal of existing pavement, removal of existing sub-base and starting over building pavement section back up).
2) Grading around the building requires correction up against the building. Numerous locations show signs of locations where water either drain back toward the building and/or ponds up against the building. The top of the foundation wall can be seen in numerous locations around the building where these depressions exist.
3) A large tree is growing in the existing courtyard. While the tree itself doesn't appear to be causing any structural issues with the building, the amount of leaves and branches the tree drops in the fall is clearly an issue on the roof with preventing drainage to occur at the roof drains.

Exterior:

1) With the exception of one or two entry storefronts and doors the existing windows are original to the building and 98% require replacement. Windows are single pane and the sealants around the windows are in a severe state of deterioration.
2) The existing porcelain enamel panels located over the windows of the original building require replacement. Panels are severely faded, rusting in some locations and sealants are in a severe state of deterioration.
3) The existing entry canopy steel panels require replacement or re-cladding as they are rusting/rusting through in numerous locations.
4) Numerous locations of brick and mortar require cleaning and tuck-pointing on the 19956 and 1964 buildings.
5) Roofing on the facility breaks down as follows:
    a. Part of the roofing (6,800 SF) was replaced in 2014 with fully adhered EPDM.
    b. Approximately another 36,216 SF of the roof is a fully adhered EPDM roofing system (date unknown). These areas of roof do not show positive drainage with many areas of ponding present.
    c. The remaining 13,328 SF of roofing is a ballasted EPDM system that requires replacement. Various "soft" areas below the membrane. This is typically an indication that there is wet insulation present. In addition, a high amount of organic debris and moss are present within the rock ballast.
    d. Perimeter flashings for the entire building should be looked at for replacement as various vintages of flashing are present.

Interior (Structure):

1) Numerous locations of floor slab in the existing building are showing severe signs of settlement. Settlement ranges from ¼" to several inches around the perimeter of rooms with noticeable incline/decline to floor slabs within classrooms. While some locations of walls are showing cracking or other signs of settlement (i.e. door frames are no longer plum), it does not appear that structural walls are moving with or independently of the floor slab. This is further reinforced by the fact that the thresholds at most doorways are "raised" indicating that footings/foundation walls are not moving below and the movement is isolated to the flor slabs.

Interior (Finishes):

1) Due to the floor slab settlement issues and age of flooring in the 1956 building, a lot of floor tile (9"x9" & 1'x1') is either cracking, breaking at the joints or completely letting loose. Additionally, due to the floor tile and exposed mastic, it would be highly recommended to have these materials tested by a hazardous materials consultant as ICS's experience has shown that the existing flooring materials typically are found to contain asbestos. Carpet has been installed in some rooms to address floor tiles letting loose.
2) The metal ceiling/decking in the 1964 ALC gym space is showing signs of damage and age. Numerous areas of decking are bent and/or are letting loose.

3) Casework throughout the building is original ranging from original wood casework in the 1956 building to metal cabinets/shelves integral to the unit ventilators in the 1964 building. In many rooms it is apparent that
4) Ceramic tile in the toilet rooms throughout the 1956 building is cracking, popping loose or missing due to the floor slab movement. Toilet rooms would require new floor and wall tile, if they were remodeled to provide accessible toilet rooms.
5) Doors and hardware throughout the facility are reaching the end of their life cycle and should be scheduled for replacement.
6) Ceilings throughout the building require replacement.
7) Wall finishes require updating (ranging from patching and painting to full replacement) throughout the building.

Mechanical:

1) Waste piping associated with sinks and floor drains throughout the 1956 building are suspected to be pinched or crushed due to the floor slab settlement throughout the building. Numerous attempts to unclog drains have been unsuccessful; or if successful only last for a limited period of time. As a result, numerous sinks throughout the 1956 building have been covered up to prevent their use. Replacement of all below grade waste lines is recommended at the time of floor slab replacement to ensure that proper drainage occurs.
2) Supply piping throughout the building is galvanized and requires replacement due to low flows at numerous areas throughout the building. Poor availability of hot water in areas of the building have been noted as well.
3) The facility currently has two (2) boilers. Of the two boilers, only one (1) is operated to provide heat to the building. This boiler is newer with a re-used burner outfitted on it. The other boiler is original to the 1964 building and is currently not being used. The boiler room has been outfitted with new pumps recently to provide proper heating water flows throughout the facility.
4) The HVAC systems in the building are broken down as follows:
    a. 1956 – The four (4) HVAC units that serve the building are located in each of the four (4) original building wings. Ductwork serves the adjacent spaces from below the floor slab. It is believed that at least one (1) duct has been crushed due to movement in the floor slabs. It is unknown how many of the existing ducts are partially crushed due to the floor slab movement.
    b. 1964 – The spaces in this portion of building are served by unit ventilators located on the exterior walls with residential air conditioning units installed in the existing window system.
    c. 1986 – This equipment is the newest in the building, but only serves the Community Ed. area of the building. While the air-handling equipment appears to be in good working order, the condensing unit located on the adjacent roof requires replacement.
5) Controls are pneumatic throughout the building and provide limited controllability to equipment. In some cases controllability is as simple as an on/off function rather than a full range of controllability that would be available with modern controls.
6) The current facility has sprinklers installed throughout.

Electrical:

1) Lighting throughout the building currently consists of various vintages of fluorescent lighting. Electrical panels are original to the building and appear to be in working order. Custodial staff have stated that periodic maintenance associated with faulty breakers has been the main issues encountered to date.
2) By upgrading the HVAC equipment, panel upgrades may be necessary to provide the required power to modern equipment.

Security:

1) The ALC potion of the building (1964) has security cameras and door position alarms installed. The remainder of the building does not have extensive security measures. Additional security cameras and card readers should be considered due to the multiple entrances present in the building.
2) The building currently has numerous points of entrance due to the various programmatic uses housed in the facility. None of the entrances would be considered "secure" entrances by modern standards. An ideal situation would be having one (1) controls entrance adjacent to a main office/security office where visitors are required to check-in before being released into the rest of the building.
3) Classroom spaces are currently not outfitted with door hardware that has a security classroom locking function.

Accessibility:

1) Only two (2) toilet rooms are accessible in the entire facility and exist near the ECFE classrooms. All other toilet rooms are extremely small in size making it difficult to impossible to create accessibility without: 1) reducing the fixture count in the building; 2) renovations with would require taking square footage from adjacent spaces
2) Due to the floor slab settlement in various areas of the 1956 building, many of the thresholds entering classrooms create a ridge (greater than ¼" in some cases) at the door thresholds entering the building.
3) The stage area being used as a conference room in the 1956 building is not accessible.

Program:

1) It was observed that numerous locations that are less than ideal for the current use. Some examples of this are:
    a. Staff person working in what was originally a nurse's office toilet room in the Special Programs Office.
    b. Staff person working in what was originally a locker room in the 1956 building.

c. The original kitchen and gym areas are being used for building/District storage.
d. The kitchen/student dining areas for the ALC is currently set up in what was originally a kindergarten classroom and corridors. While this programmatic need is being met by temporary measures that satisfy the requirements or a warming/catering kitchen, the space is deficient compared to what a new facility would provide.
e. The back portion of the stage (1956) is being used as a conference room.

Cost of renovation:

Return building to "like new" condition: Approximately $12.25 million.

New construction of similar sized building: Approximately $15.85 million.

Cost to update and address all building issues at West is approximately 77% of building new.