

Facility Tour Summary – Key Takeaways

The following summary highlights major themes and observations from the September 30, 2025 Planning for Growth facility tours at Central School, Mt. Horeb School, and Warren Middle School. The purpose is to capture key take-aways that should inform October 1 discussions on guiding principles, school organization options, and long-term facility planning.

Mt. Horeb School

- Purpose-built design with large, well-laid-out spaces for art, music, gym, and library.
- Support programs have dedicated small rooms, generally well placed and minimally disruptive.
- Preschool and special programs take full classrooms; bathrooms remain a pressure point for K/preK.
- Some sensory and de-escalation rooms under-utilized.
- Viewed as having the most flexibility to absorb growth among the elementary schools.

Central School

- Heavy reliance on retrofitted spaces; many programs operate in standard classrooms (music, REACH, world language).
- Special programs (ASAP, ESL, Speech, Autism) occupy full classrooms, limiting capacity for general education.
- Autism program is large and resource intensive; spaces modified with bathrooms and de-escalation areas.
- APR and specials spaces under strain; layout is confusing and difficult to reconfigure.
- Strong concern about balancing future growth with existing special education footprint.

Warren Middle School

- Strong mix of purpose-built spaces (science labs, art, music, home ec, wellness) with several unused classrooms.
- Special education programs integrated with space available for expansion (e.g., autism program).
- Can absorb near-term growth, but risk is erosion of specialty spaces if enrollment increases sharply.
- APR, gym, and library considered sufficient for current/future use.
- Overall impression: WMS has capacity but needs protection of its specialized programs.

District-Wide Themes

- Elementary schools face more immediate space strain than WMS, especially at Central.
- Special education programs require full classrooms with low student-teacher ratios, limiting flexibility.
- Preschool classrooms consume high-quality spaces, complicating K–5 planning.
- APRs and specials (art, music, world language) are consistent pressure points.
- Significant inequities exist between schools (e.g., Mt. Horeb's flexibility vs. Central's constraints).
- Long-term growth planning must balance preserving specialty programs with adding capacity.

1. Purpose-Built vs. Retrofitted Spaces

Where do you see spaces designed for their current use (e.g., music room, lab)? Where are spaces adapted for another purpose?

- Spaces tend to be smaller at Central than at Mt. Horeb, including the lunch space.
- Spaces are mostly adapted
- Room 29 - music but in a regular classroom
- Room 27 - reach and world languages
- Sensory room took over a classroom, music room smaller than Mt. Horeb, REACH shares with language, instrumental room smaller than Mt. Horeb, art room smaller
- Library could seemingly be used more efficiently (back open space)
- Great art room
- Although physical classrooms are smaller (i think), it didn't feel overcrowded - retrofitted spaces look like they've been retrofitted (i.e. that additional space created onto the library) not a criticism, I think it's the best of a challenging situation
- Central APR - how does it work/not work for the future?
- Library rooms dedicated to small group learning
- some full size classrooms dedicated to small group learning
- A classroom is being used as a music room
- Can music/ASAP math combine for other uses? Spanish/art?

2. Shared & Support Spaces

What do ESL pull-out, ASAP, resource, or OT look like? Where are they housed, and how do they affect general education?

- Did we see the OT room?
- Designated space for these programs is significantly more constrained than at Mt. Horeb or ALT
- ASAP smaller room, ELA/old girls locker room = staff bathroom leads to gym, 1:1 instruction effect on general population is less space and combining of classes
- The tour didn't highlight this enough. I suppose it looked adequate.
- Can any of these smaller spaces be repurposed/expanded to create larger classrooms?
- ASAP, ESL, speech have their own spaces
- General education may need the full size classes if enrollment goes up
- They take up full sized classrooms which could impact gen ed population if more space was needed

3. Special Programs & Preschool

How are preschool and special education programs accommodated? What impact do they have on general education space?

- The special ed spaces seemed nicer at ALT. Nicer materials, for example in the sensory rooms.
- If preschool were to go back to Central, then K would lose bathrooms.

- The programs significantly affect facilities (they occupy significant space) even though most students are not in the designated areas for all or most of their day.
- Preschool was moved out but when housed at Central it took away from K classrooms with bathrooms
- A lot of space goes to special ed classrooms
- 1 very large autism classroom, 2 appropriately sized. Lot of staff. Lot of resources dedicated to these classrooms.
- Just a noticing - there are a lot of adults that adds to the crowded feeling
- Is more space (square footage) required/needed/mandated for special education? ie classroom size
- These classrooms have bathrooms and dedicated deescalation spaces. The impact may be general ed needing the space.
- They use full size classrooms. Rooms have been modified to accommodate sped needs which could make it difficult to reclaim space.

4. Future Growth & Middle School Transition

What spaces at WMS or the elementary schools seem most likely to be pressured by enrollment growth?

- APR
- Generally the age of part of the building
- Extracurricular space (music/art/fitness)
- Specials classrooms being drafted to accommodate larger need for class space, larger class sizes that move away from the small school feel
- APR would be stretched but possible solution if over capacity for lunch? Maybe add another lunch section?
- With all the housing funneling to Central and their spaces already being utilized efficiently, it will be important to determine facilities solutions
- Kindergarten & preschool, special ed spaces
- WMS = 3 available/unused classrooms
- The growth of the autism program at Central will filter to the middle school
- Central has a challenging layout which could make it challenging.

5. Big Picture Connections

- What surprised you today?
- What patterns/themes do you notice across schools?
- How might these observations inform long-term planning?
- The layout is confusing to someone who really hasn't been here. Kids have to cross the parking lot to get to the fields. Some space like part of the library that could possibly be used for other purposes.
- How do teachers handle having to move classrooms? Is there a plan that can try to minimize teachers having to move classrooms frequently?
- How much more limited the facilities at Central are
- How outdated Central is, small APR room
- Dwarfing class rooms, specials into spaces

- I was surprised about the classroom sizes. Being such an old school, I thought they'd be smaller. Didn't feel like there was as much opportunity to optimize space usage at Central as at Mt. Horeb.
- Lots to consider - volume, storage spaces, non core instruction needs
- Well-run schools
- How do CST & others conduct confidential meetings/phone calls in shared spaces?
- Redesigned spaces (ie fitness/wellness/Zen Den) - don't reconvert to classrooms. Too much through, efforts, and \$\$\$ went into creating these spaces for the benefit of students
- Surprised - how many specialties share spaces
- Patterns - the need for dedicated spaces for different programs
- ASAP math - 1 student
- APR only for lunch
- Art room additional use?
- Spanish could be a classroom
- CST could be a small group instructional room

1. Purpose-Built vs. Retrofitted Spaces

Where do you see spaces designed for their current use (e.g., music room, lab)? Where are spaces adapted for another purpose?

- Music, gym, art, library → designed specifically
- Could instrumental music and music be combined into the music room?
- Gym office space → could other offices be in there too?
- Music and art seem to take up large spaces but I don't know what it would look like otherwise
- Music room, instrumental music room, shared rooms that were dedicated before
- Big music room - could use music & art rooms more effectively
- Classroom spaces are well divided, great layout.
- Spaces that are for specials that aren't used for ½ of the week are not efficient.
- Grade banding would probably make the special areas facilities & staffing more efficient
- Art, music, prek, gym, library, k, apr
- OT rooms, ASAP reading, art and music rooms, speech rooms
- Can music and art share a space if those classrooms were needed?

2. Shared & Support Spaces

What do ESL pull-out, ASAP, resource, or OT look like? Where are they housed, and how do they affect general education?

- Could the 2 speech rooms be combined? Maybe with a divider? Could OT uses the APR when it's not lunchtime?
- Mixed of pull out & fully integrated
- Prek class smaller
- Seemed like good use of space but didn't focus enough on this to say for sure
- Smaller sized rooms appropriately placed, used well
- Close to gen-ed rooms, easy transition, short distance
- Some have dedicated spaces, some push into classrooms, more than one specialty may share a room
- The building was planned out well, currently they don't seem to be affecting general education population

3. Special Programs & Preschool

How are preschool and special education programs accommodated? What impact do they have on general education space?

- Additional preK classrooms moved K around. Would be ideal to have all preK near each other.
- Opposite end of buildings
- Prek special classrooms smaller student teacher ratio; classrooms dedicated just for these students
- Kindergarten - no in-class bathrooms/share with 5th grade
- preK rooms looked appropriately sized

- Space for sensory & space for deescalation - neither used w/regularity & one (deescalation) not used at all - consider sensory spaces in the classroom - it's already big & enrollment is necessarily lower
- Different ends of building, tucked into outer spaces, was designed as and used as K classrooms, which takes away bathrooms from K but works
- Preschool has AC and bathrooms; rooms that don't have bathrooms are close to one
- These programs take up full size classrooms which may be needed as enrollment increases

4. Future Growth & Middle School Transition

What spaces at WMS or the elementary schools seem most likely to be pressured by enrollment growth?

- Larger class sizes that move away from the small school feel
- Specials such as art/music are becoming smaller and smaller dedicated space
- Felt like Mt. Horeb could take on some growth comfortably
- K and preschool due to bathroom regulations
- Special education and special programs
- Classroom space to accommodate gen ed and sped populations

5. Big Picture Connections

- What surprised you today?
- What patterns/themes do you notice across schools?
- How might these observations inform long-term planning?
- Right now there is still space to add more kids in each grade. What is anticipated growth?
- Surprises = The size of the library, how much space preK takes up
- Dwarfing of class room size, larger class size/bodies in seats
- Plenty of opportunity to optimize facility usage, feels like there's capacity
- Shared spaces (patterns)
- Ability to look at other spaces as shared spaces
- Surprised - how adaptable some of the spaces are
- Patterns - most specialities have their own space

1. Purpose-Built vs. Retrofitted Spaces

Where do you see spaces designed for their current use (e.g., music room, lab)? Where are spaces adapted for another purpose?

- Music and art designed spaces
- Weight rooms adapted spaces
- New science labs
- Most special purposes have dedicated spaces
- Seems like many large dedicated spaces - wellness, home ec, science, but I don't want to lose them for our student experience
- Classrooms seemed to be designated for their proper use, seems as if space currently is not an issue but will be once the elementary schools spill into WMS after round 3 & 4 housing is complete.
- I was impressed with the special purpose rooms (art music home ec I&D). Good that they're mostly grouped together apart from instructional classrooms. Would want to maintain these dedicated spaces if possible.
- The spaces that are specially designed or that have been redesigned are excellent - well thought out and functional - it's great to see all that our kids have access to
- Music classes w/home arts, art room, tech office - all designed with the specific class in mind
- Most specialties have their own, non-shared space. Language has its own classrooms.

2. Shared & Support Spaces

What do ESL pull-out, ASAP, resource, or OT look like? Where are they housed, and how do they affect general education?

- Mixed with dedicated spaces when needed
- Currently it does not seem to have the same effects as it does at the elementary level
- Seems like there's not as much of this at WMS as at elementary schools. Will need to prepare for more of this in the future.
- There are mostly push-in or small classrooms which are housed w/in general education classrooms
- These specialty have push in schedules, whereas the elementary schools had more pull out

3. Special Programs & Preschool

How are preschool and special education programs accommodated? What impact do they have on general education space?

- We saw some special ed spaces. There were a few empty classrooms that might be able to accommodate autism classrooms. Could the empty classrooms be split to accommodate smaller class sizes in special ed programs and OT/speech/sensory room?
- Will need space for specialized classrooms coming from elementary
- Special ed programs are nestled into areas away from the main hallways, allowing for specific student needs to be met
- Special education has its own space, plus more integrated spaces with general ed students

4. Future Growth & Middle School Transition

What spaces at WMS or the elementary schools seem most likely to be pressured by enrollment growth?

- Weight rooms, maybe some of the teacher planning rooms, I&D space, and home ec spaces were pretty large though seem like a good use of the space
- APR, gym, library seem large enough
- Looks like WMS might need to downscale some of their “special” rooms once the growth fully hits the school
- Feels like there’s room for growth (thankfully). Multiple classrooms not in use, plus some rooms look like they can take on different uses.
- It appears that this is the school that can handle growth - I amend my thoughts from #3 - space for additional specialized rooms will be ok probably
- The APR and music rooms
- The middle school may have to adapt to an increase in special education students as they come from the elementary schools

5. Big Picture Connections

- What surprised you today?
- What patterns/themes do you notice across schools?
- How might these observations inform long-term planning?
- Balancing need for additional spaces vs. # kids per class
- In middle school - teachers sharing spaces if more sections are needed. Would need more prep space
- Any way to repurpose the entryway once the new secure entryway is built to house classes or special ed spaces?
- Is there speech & OT here now? Will that be needed if an autism program is needed?
- Surprised by how large WMS is
- Seems that the schools differ more than one would think = equitable is not a common theme
- I was pleasantly surprised by the feeling that WMS has room to take on growth. Future special needs students may create more logistical challenges though. It seems like growth is a more pressing concern at the elementary schools, while a longer term concern for WMS.
- I see plenty of opportunity to optimize how spaces are used in both WMS & the elementary schools. May be able to be creative with scheduling to use rooms more efficiently.
- I think the specialized spaces at the middle school level are necessary to provide opportunities for a range of learners but also to prep for HS; Future planning should ensure that they can be maintained to the greatest extent possible.
- Overall - schools look clean & well maintained, both inside and out
- Art & science rooms are only in their designed spaces this current year
- More than 1 empty classroom that has been repurposed
- Speciality classes using full size classrooms
- Different spaces may need to be reallocated as enrollment grows