

Aurora Borealis Charter High School

Facility Update - November 27, 2018

The Aurora Borealis Charter High School committee has come to a clear and decisive action plan with regards to a facility for ABCHS. While this is our primary plan, we want to acknowledge that we are continually evaluating all options as they present themselves in our community.

Year One - Portables

Our plan at this time is to utilize portables on the lot located at the current ABCS K-8 school for the first year. We would first look at using portables from within the school district should there be any available. If nothing is available, we have solicited quotes from companies in Anchorage on renting and purchasing portables. Based on the quotes we have received, this is a financially feasible option within our projected budget.

Years Two through Four and Beyond – Carr's Mall

The first year in portables would allow us enough time to work with space at the Carr's Mall to move through an occupancy change and approval process. Since our last meeting with the School Board Charter School Committee, we have met with the local fire marshal who was in contact with the code official at the city of Kenai. Together they identified some basic areas that would require further investigation to determine if the space as it is now would meet Group E (educational) occupancy. These areas have to do with the specific type of sprinkler and alert system that the building has and whether it meets, or could be upgraded to meet our occupancy needs.

At this point in time, we are caught in a catch 22 situation.

Our next step as advised by the fire marshal and code official is to seek the professional services of a licensed engineer to do a thorough review of the space at the Carr's Mall and identify any code items that would need to be addressed within this space for our use. This is not to say that this space wouldn't work for our needs, only that further review and additional professional services are needed at this time.

The procurement of these services is at a standstill until we have a more definitive indication that the ABCHS charter will be approved.

The use of the space at the Carr's Mall would be utilized beginning year two, which would allow us approximately 20 months to work through this approval and if needed upgrade process which we feel is adequate and reasonable. Part of the space approval would also include an expansion plan to incorporate a permanent space starting year 3 to house grades 9-12.

Additional Considerations – Consolidation Conversations

While the above is our plan in moving forward with ABCHS, we have heard that the school district is looking at consolidating schools in the future. ABCHS would like to be fiscally responsible and first try to keep our funding within the district for facility use if there was a feasible option. We would be interested in being part of any conversations with regards to district consolidation to best utilize our public resources and funding should it be an option in the future.

In conclusion, the quickest and easiest way to have ABCHS up and running by August 2019 is to start year one in portables and then expand to the Carr's Mall starting year two unless another long-term solution presents itself with a public facility consolidation before then.