

Superintendent's corner

Last week I highlighted some of the major concerns and limitations with our current facility. Although the facility is rich with traditions, the cost to renovate it is significantly more than the projected cost to build a new facility on our school campus. This week I'd like to talk a little about the advantages of building a new facility.

For starters, our design plan includes a multipurpose field house with a regulation size court, meeting space, weight room, wrestling room, and 3 lane track. This will provide a lot of opportunities for the district to host JO Volleyball tournaments, as well as, AAU Basketball tournaments. Hosting these tournaments will generate revenue for our athletic department, monies that will be reinvested into our athletic programs. Additionally, hosting these tournaments will bring spectators into our community, spectators that will purchase gas, food, and other items pumping thousands of dollars into our local economy ever year.

Currently our district sponsors an indoor track program for our students during the winter. Without a suitable facility, our program is forced to practice out of town. Construction of a field house will allow our students to practice here at home and provide greater flexibility on schedules. Additionally, the field house will also allow our wrestling team to practice on campus, without the trouble of organizing transportation to the currently facility up town.

During the Winter Sports season, we have different basketball teams having practice starting at 3pm, ending some nights as late as 9pm. This is due to the fact that we have 2 gyms and upwards of 9 different teams needing to practice. This doesn't even take into consideration the community rec league for 5th and 6th grade basketball, often forced to practice on Sundays, as this is the only time the gym is available. By adding the additional court, we can run a more efficient practice schedule; one that we anticipate having our middle and high school teams end their practices by 6pm.

Although the field house and court will see plenty of use by our athletic programs, there will still be ample opportunities for the facility to be used by the community. This Community Recreation Center will offer a lot of potential for fitness classes, Silver Sneaker programs, and weight training. The district is currently researching a fee structure to make this space affordable for all community members to utilize. I personally am a fitness advocate and I've found it troubling that our community does not have an affordable convenient option to promote health and wellness. I see this project as a way to satisfy needs of our school and athletic program while also providing much needed fitness options for our community.

As you can see, this construction project offers a lot of opportunity for our students and general community. It can provide an alternative revenue stream for our Athletic Department, and provide economic boost for our downtown businesses. Yet, these are only a few of the many benefits that this project can bring to our community.

If you would like to discuss this project further, please feel free to contact me

Until Next Time.....GO WILDCATS!!!!

Brad Romano

Superintendent

New London Local Schools