

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Pittsfield High School
300 East Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201



MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to empower all our students to become contributing members of the global community.

Introduction

At the request of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), the Pittsfield Public Schools developed a DRAFT Educational Program for Pittsfield High School based on the requirements outlined in the MSBA Module 3 – Feasibility Study, Section 3.1.2-Educational Program. The purpose of preparing this draft is to evaluate the existing educational program offered by the District and to define the educational activities that will be offered in the future. The information provided within this document is based on current data and the Education Visioning Master Planning Study completed in May 2008 and prepared by Dore and Whittier Architects, in collaboration with DeJong Locker Educational Planners, the Pittsfield Public Schools Administration, and the Pittsfield School Committee. The main goal of the 2008 study was to create a process by which to evaluate and determine the long-range plans for organizing and delivering high school programs in Pittsfield.

To date, this draft plan has been shared with and approved by the Pittsfield School Committee and the Pittsfield Public Schools Building Needs Commission. It has also been referenced as part of public outreach meetings throughout the month of May 2011. This plan, however, has not been widely disseminated for public comment, which will happen in the coming months in concert with the design process. It is also expected that this plan will be shared with the Pittsfield Public Schools staff in the coming school year.

Goal

Our goal in modernizing and reorganizing our high schools is to provide our students with better preparation for their pursuits after high school graduation including college, other forms of continuing education, and career. With this background, it is expected that every student will have the ability to lead a meaningful and productive life, which includes earning a wage sufficient to maintain the life s/he chooses and having the potential for career advancement and the ability to be an active and informed citizen.

General Overview of Pittsfield High School

Pittsfield High School (PHS) was constructed in 1931, containing 163,635 square feet, and currently serves approximately 1,000 students. The original building included classroom and laboratory rooms, vocational and life skills rooms, a gymnasium, a large theater, two outside courtyards, a small library, and a cafeteria. In 1975, the school was renovated, with 39,416 square feet added, bringing the total to 203,051 square feet. The renovation created a back corridor link that enclosed two formerly open courtyards. In addition, a false floor was added to the theater with the upper portion becoming the library/media center, and the lower portion was converted into classroom space. In addition, a new gymnasium and smaller theater were added. Throughout the school's history, vocational spaces have been added and upgraded, laboratory spaces have been upgraded, flooring and windows have been replaced, and some classrooms have been upgraded. Technology and security systems have been added over the last decade. Most recently, spaces for an on-site alternative school program were upgraded.

The school sits on 10 acres of land that include tennis courts, softball and playing fields, and parking lots.

Core Values of the Pittsfield Public Schools

To serve our community and its children by creating a school environment where lifelong learning is valued, excellence is expected, and improvement is continuous;

To meet the needs of each student by providing the information, encouragement, support, and instruction required to meet or to exceed the district's high expectations and rigorous academic demands;

To prepare every student for post-secondary education, career satisfaction, and lifelong economic, social, and civic success.

Our Values

ALL STUDENTS

can learn and achieve, and they deserve to learn in an environment with high expectations.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING

drives student learning.

SUCCESS

happens when

- the learning environment is intellectually, emotionally, and physically safe;
- the curriculum is rigorous and relevant;
- expectations are high, clear, and sustainable;
- staff collaborate;
- the culture reflects both respect and trust;
- students are challenged to be active participants in a meaningful learning experience;
- the focus is on results with evidence of student learning used as part of a continuous improvement process.

DIVERSITY

enriches the learning environment.

COMMUNITY

partnerships play a crucial role in shaping student growth and progress.



Core Values of Pittsfield High School

Pittsfield High School's core values were developed as part of the NEASC accreditation process in 2004. Currently, PHS staff is preparing for a 2014 decennial visit and, therefore, values and mission are being revisited.

- We believe that it is the responsibility of Pittsfield High School not only to reflect the community, but also in cooperation with the home and other institutions, guide our young people to maturity by helping them to understand themselves and the world in which they live.
- We provide an atmosphere that fosters a love of learning, encourages intellectual inquiry, and promotes the growth of personal, civic, and social responsibility.
- Because the school recognizes individual interests and abilities, it provides classroom and extracurricular activities in a varied and ever-evolving program designed to satisfy our diversity of intellectual, social, emotional, and physical needs.
- We recognize our professional responsibility to provide an environment, which will allow individual treatment of students, facilitate flexibility in response to special needs, and promote attitudes and behaviors which are non-prejudicial regarding a student's ability, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and health status.
- We are committed to a continuing search for innovative teaching methods.
- We believe that beyond the immediate goal of providing the academic needs for college preparation and career training, is the higher responsibility of helping the individual student achieve full potential as a human being, with a profound reverence for life and a respect for the dignity and worth of every individual.

Grade and School Configuration Policies

Pittsfield High School (PHS) serves grades 9-12. Students in grade 8 participate in an Open House which allows them to explore options available at each high school. While students are predominantly assigned to their geographic home school, they may apply for intra-district transfer for programmatic or other reasons. Almost all transfer requests are granted. Students can attend PHS through tuition and School Choice programs from the following districts:

Adams/Cheshire Regional School District
Berkshire Hills Regional School District
Central Berkshire Regional School District
Gateway Regional School District
Lee Public Schools
Lenox Public Schools
Mount Greylock Regional School District
North Adams Public Schools

Pittsfield Public Schools
Shaker Mountain School Union #70 Residents
Southern Berkshire Regional School District

Class Size Policies

The Pittsfield Public Schools has a target class size of 24 students for academic courses. Chapter 74 Guidelines dictate class sizes for vocational programs.

School Scheduling Method

PHS operates on a straight 7-period day with 49-minute classes and no rotation. School begins at 7:20 a.m. and ends at 2:20 p.m. Laboratory periods for science are two class periods long (a double period) and vocational classes may be up to three periods long (a triple period).

A high school scheduling team has been assembled in recent years with discussion regarding alternative schedule models such as block and rotating schedule. In addition, the CVTE (Career Vocational Technical Education) advisory board has requested consideration of a week on/week off model, which is being investigated.

Teaching Methodology and Structure

The mission of Pittsfield High School is to “empower all our students to become contributing members of the global community”. The current educational structure is department-based and includes the following core academic programs: English, History/Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, World Languages, Physical Education and Human Development, Business/Technology, and CVTE.

All students shall be enrolled in specific programs. Students who fulfill the general graduation requirements will receive diplomas. Students who complete specific course requirements for particular programs as well as the general graduation requirements will receive, in addition to diplomas, certificates of completion for the particular programs successfully completed.

There are four certificate programs:

- Arts and Sciences
- Business Education Program
- Vocational Education Program
- Work Based Learning

PROGRAM OF STUDIES CHART

	Arts/ Science s	Voc./Tech. Two Year	Voc./Tech. Three Year	Business	Work-Based Learning
English	4	4	4	4	4
History/Social Studies	3	3	3	3	2
Mathematics	3	3	3	3	4
Science	3	3	3	3	2
World Language	2	0	0	0	0
Physical Education	4	4	4	4	4
Human Development	2	2	2	2	2

Currently, high school leaders and district staff are in the process of aligning graduation standards and college/career plans with the statewide Race to the Top Initiative (RTTT). As a participating district, Pittsfield will engage in the Mass Model (for guidance structures) and Mass Core (graduation standards). Over the course of the next three years, RTTT funds will be used to realign graduation standards and create individualized graduation/guidance plans for each incoming ninth grade student. The expectation is that graduation pathways will not be limited to the four that are currently in place but rather will be individualized for each student with the support of school counselors and parents/guardians. Additionally, ensuring that all students complete the Mass Core will prepare them for successful entrance into higher education and careers.

Alternative pathways for students have been created in partnership with local agencies. The Positive Options Program, hosted by Berkshire Community College, affords students in this program the opportunity to complete their high school courses in a structured setting while participating in college seminars, workshops and courses. The Juvenile Resource Center is run in partnership with the Berkshire County Sheriff's Office and supports students who are at risk for dropping out, are court involved, or have seriously violated school/district behavioral policies. The Helen Berube Teen Parent Program supports teen mothers in continuing their high school education while ensuring that they receive proper prenatal care and gain the skills they need to parent their children successfully. Finally, the Educational Options for Success (EOS) program offers three levels of academic, social, and behavioral supports for students within

Guiding Educational Principles

Our guiding principles contain the essential constructs for Educational Delivery and Structure beginning with the following Goals of Education:

- **Academics:** All students are engaged in rigorous courses focusing on both basic skills and higher order thinking;
- **Social Skills:** All students exhibit the appropriate and necessary social skills for global success including written, verbal, and non-verbal communication skills as well as the ability to work in teams;

- **Learning Related to Outside World:** All learning is linked to real world practice in the form of projects, internships, apprenticeships, and/or community service learning;
- **Technical Skills:** All students exhibit both universal and theme-specific technical skills;
- **Creative Skills:** All students are exposed to theme-specific instruction and content that reinforces the value of creativity and creative thinking.

All of these goals will be bound by the emerging Twenty-first Century Skills. These skills include the new four C's: Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity. As part of the current NEASC decennial visit, these skills are being defined and articulated as part of the self-study process (described below).

Educational Delivery and Structure

Educational Delivery addresses the overarching themes required to provide a world-class educational experience for Pittsfield's high school students supported by the following objectives:

- Student learning is enhanced with students and parents making informed choices of study areas that create personalized learning experiences when aligned with student interests;
- Student learning is enhanced by reducing the separations between career-technical/vocational and traditional academic learning to create learning opportunities for students with no "labeling" of student abilities;
- Since learning has more relevance when it is connected to real-world situations; learning for all of Pittsfield's high school students should be connected to the community, region, and world through active learning experiences;
- Community Service Learning programs and internships provide critical learning and social experiences for all students and greatly increase opportunities for success in both the present and the future;
- Applied learning is as relevant in the core subject areas, i.e., English, math, science, and social studies, as it is in career-technical/vocational programs;
- Academic integration with the career-technical curriculum should become the standard;
- Teachers and administrators will continuously work together to create curriculum connections between Taconic High School and Pittsfield High School and, within each school, to offer the richest, most holistic learning experience;
- Teachers should recognize the multiple intelligences of students, and be attentive to reaching all students;
- Project-based learning should be a basic component of every teacher's delivery, as it allows direct application of learning, and often creates the greatest memories of learning;
- Continue fostering dual enrollments with college-level programs;
- Create opportunities for deep, exploratory, personalized learning such as the Senior Capstone Project;
- Increase awareness of high school opportunities and choices among Pittsfield's middle school students;
- Enhance the ongoing search for school improvement with flexible attitudes and programs;

- Athletics, leadership, and school and community service opportunities are critical aspects of student learning, and should be supported and enhanced.
- Develop Professional Learning Communities among staff to analyze student data and work, discuss best practices, and plan cross-curricular units of study.
- Organize the student population into smaller learning communities, teams, and academies in order to foster student-adult relationships, collaborate and coordinate curricula, and focus instruction on student interests and needs.

21st Century Visioning Efforts

Pittsfield High School continues to apply guidelines provided by the HSTW (High Schools That Work) network. Both Pittsfield and Taconic High School were previously members of this network that encourages best practices among schools offering career/vocational technical programs. These guidelines include high-level academic programming for all students, personalization of the learning environment, strong relationships between staff and students, and the directing of teachers to serve as facilitators and coaches. While many of these features have been applied at Pittsfield High, some, such as the overlapping of academic and career/vocational programming, as well as models of interdisciplinary, project-based study, have been limited within the current physical plant.

Beyond HSTW, the school district (with the support of the Pittsfield School Committee) authorized a visioning/feasibility study. This study included a diverse group of educators and community members who met with the purpose of defining what they believed the district's high school(s) should look like in the 21st century. This visioning/feasibility team met during the fall and winter of 2007 and generated a solid educational foundation/philosophy upon which to restructure/remodel/rebuild our high schools. The report was included in the 2009 Statement of Interest (SOI) submission and is referenced throughout this document.

In addition, both high schools are in the process of preparing for the 2014 NEASC decennial visit. As part of this visit, the 21st Century Skills will be defined and integrated into the curriculum. These include:

- Use real-world digital and other research tools to access, evaluate and effectively apply information appropriate for authentic tasks.
- Work independently and collaboratively to solve problems and reach goals.
- Communicate information clearly and effectively using tools/media in varied contexts for a variety of purposes.
- Demonstrate innovation and flexibility in thinking patterns, work habits, and working/learning conditions.
- Effectively apply the analysis, synthesis, and evaluative processes that enable productive problem solving.
- Value and demonstrate personal responsibility, character, cultural understanding, and ethical behavior.

Teacher Planning and Room Assignments

All departments have a staff room in which teachers are assigned a work space and desk. Classes are assigned using scheduling software. The goal is to limit the number of time teachers must change room locations. Many teachers are able to teach in the same room; however, some rooms may be used by other teachers during prep or supervisory periods. While there is no policy or expectation that teachers “own” their classrooms, in many cases, teachers instruct in the same room each day.

While historically teachers and classrooms are organized by department, both schools will be reducing this model by rescheduling teachers throughout the school space. This change will be made in an effort to support teaming, smaller learning communities, and professional learning teams.

Lunch Programs

The current cafeteria holds approximately 300 students and cannot accommodate the entire student body in a two 30-minute lunch period schedule that runs from 11:11 a.m.-12:34 p.m. Approximately 40% of the students use the school cafeteria, and since the high school has an open campus, many of the students travel to surrounding businesses for lunch. All students may participate in open campus, with parents and administration able to restrict this privilege.

Technology Instruction Policies and Program Requirements

Pittsfield’s school district believes technology instruction is a critical component of educational delivery at all school levels and particularly at the High Schools. Recently, the District drafted a Technology Plan in an effort to assess and improve the ability to deliver the highest level of technology instruction and support. This plan focuses on the following five domains:

- Domain 1: Teaching and Learning
- Domain 2: Data Management
- Domain 3: Network Infrastructure
- Domain 4: Technical Services
- Domain 5: Communication

PHS is 100% wireless with 36 wireless access points throughout the school. However, in the average classroom there are also two wired “drops”. There are currently 180 computers (87 of which have wireless connections to the Internet) that are used for instruction and 40 computers for administration. The computer operating system most prevalent in the school is Mac based. The school currently has 5 computer labs served by a total of 74 computers. PHS has other technologies that include portable word processors, probes/data loggers, graphing calculators, LCD projectors, video cameras, scanners and portable media players. However there are no electronic/interactive whiteboards in the building.

Art

The arts programs at PHS consist of ceramics, drawing, painting, and modeling from introductory levels to Advanced Placement options. Classes are clustered on the first floor of the school.

Music/Performing Arts

The school has a strong music/performing arts program with classrooms throughout the first floor. The library/media center is the top of a converted theater created during the 1975 renovation. A recent conversion of a television studio space to a computer lab was supported by local business. PHS offers the following performance arts programs: Theater, Orchestra, Chorus, Concert and Jazz Band. Instrumental lessons are also offered. There are limited instrumental practice spaces.

Physical Education

PHS has a Field House (two teaching stations) with spectator bleachers that accommodates a range of athletic activities such as basketball, volleyball, and table tennis. Located adjacent to the Field House are locker rooms and a wrestling room. Classes are shared by three PE teachers. Classes are unit-based, and operate on a six-week rotation. Students take gym twice a week for all four years at PHS. Most PE classes have 32-35 students per class. Walking club is offered to students who do not participate in the traditional PE classes. There are also after-school offerings that students are eligible to enroll in for PE credit. Our Adolescent Support Program (ASP) schedules special PE classes for students enrolled in the program.

Special Education

Program space is severely limited in the special education programs. Many special education classrooms have been converted from other used and lack appropriate equipment, space, and conditions for learning. For example, one special education space that was once a classroom, now serves as classroom, OT/PT space, life skills space, and community space. The Adolescent Support Program (ASP) at PHS serves students in grades 6 - 12 and consists of approximately 15 students. Educational Options for Success (EOS) at PHS serves students in grades 9 - 12 and consists of approximately 60 students. PHS has four academic support teachers who serve students in grades 9 – 12. PHS has a Substantially Separate Program for students with moderate to severe disabilities who are eligible to stay with us until they are 21 years of age. The workstudy program serves approximately 70 students. Students in the workstudy program maintain a small school store as part of their job-readiness training.

In all cases, both high schools strive to fully integrate special needs students into the fabric of the school culture, and it is the District's goal that any new construction reflects this expectation.

Vocational Education Programs

Current vocational education programs offered at Pittsfield High School include:

- Cosmetology
- Culinary Arts
- Electronics
- Facilities Management
- Health Assisting
- Small Engine Repair

In 2010, the Pittsfield School Building Needs Commission (SBNC) developed a vision statement that outlines broad goals for the school renovation/construction projects. They include:

Phase I

To build a comprehensive high school on the Valentine Road site which will facilitate a strong scientific, technical and vocational focus that will prepare students of Pittsfield and surrounding communities for careers in the 21st century. The building will be adaptable and responsive to the programming needs of the regional economy, post-secondary education and the local community.

Phase II

To renovate the historic Pittsfield High School building to facilitate the programming needs of a liberal arts education (including the fine and performing arts) that will prepare students of Pittsfield and surrounding communities for careers in the 21st century. The building will be adaptive and responsive to the programming needs of the regional economy, post secondary education and the local community.

Thus, it is expected that vocational programs currently offered at Pittsfield High School may be moved and/or combined with those programs at Taconic High School. Pittsfield High School would then have a greater emphasis on the humanities, liberal arts, and fine and performing arts. In contrast, Taconic High School would have a greater emphasis on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, with a high concentration of Chapter 74 CVTE programs. It should be emphasized that both schools will have comprehensive academic programs that meet the Mass Core requirements so that students will be fully prepared for post-secondary options. A preliminary overview of potential programs/pathways is as follows:

Pittsfield High School

Fine and Performing Arts

Visual Design and Multimedia
Art
Music
Theater

Pre-Professional

Software Applications
Business
Finance

Civics

- International Baccalaureate
- AP European History
- Sociology
- AP Psychology
- AP Economics
- AP Languages

Liberal Arts

- AP English Courses
- Media Studies

Taconic High School

High Tech Academy

Cross-Curricular Connection: Design, Engineering, Mathematics, PLTW

- Engineering Technology
- Computer Science and Electronics
- AP Physical Science

Industrial Technology Academy

Cross-Curricular Connection: Physics, Print/Schematics, Mathematics, Green Technologies

- Manufacturing Technology
- Metal Fabrication
- Facilities Management
- Carpentry
- Automotive Collision Repair and Refinishing (Auto Body)
- Automotive Technology
- Small Engines / Power Equipment Technology
- Landscaping/Horticulture

Life and Human Services Academy

Cross-Curricular Connection: Service, Biology, Anatomy & Physiology

- Cosmetology
- Barbering
- Culinary Arts
- Allied Health
- AP Life and Environmental Sciences

Post-secondary Options:

- Green Building Trades, Electrical, Plumbing Theory, Aesthetician/Nail Tech, Cosmetology, Barbering, EMT

Work Experience Programs

Cooperative and diversified work programs are offered for students at both high schools. Cooperative work is provided for technical-vocational students in their area of shop concentration. Students may work up to three periods in the field each day and are supervised by the district's work coordinator and the student's CVTE teacher.

Unlike the Co-op Program for technical-vocational students, the Diversified Work Experience Program is open to non-technical-vocational students. Students receive 10-36 credits upon successful completion of the program, depending on the number of school periods used for the work experience. The School-to-Work Office will provide assistance in securing work experiences (jobs). However, students are encouraged, whenever possible, to secure jobs on their own. In addition, students must provide their own transportation. All meetings and activities related to the Diversified Work Experience Program will be taken from work time and not school time.

Grade 9 & 10 Teams

Pittsfield High School is currently in the process of building teams to support 9th and 10th grade students. Teachers will be divided into two teams per grade. Each team will consist of one or more teachers from each department who will share a similar cohort of students. In order to increase teacher access to their team members and foster access to the students on the team, Pittsfield High School will reassign teachers to classrooms in close proximity to one another. Each team will be provided with bi-weekly collaboration time to plan around increasing the level of student achievement and passing rates, improving student conduct and attendance rates, and maintaining clear and consistent lines of parent communication.

Academy Programs

Both Pittsfield and Taconic High Schools offers Academy Programs to students in Grades 10 - 12. These Academies include:

PHS

- Academy of Finance
- Business Academy
- Tourism and Hospitality
- Fine Arts

THS

- Academy of Business Management
- Academy of Information Technology
- Academy of Human Services
- Science and Engineering Academy
- Academy of Fine and Performing Arts

In the Academy programs, students follow a series of linked courses that offer access and exposure to post-secondary and career options. While all Academy students must complete a core academic curriculum, their electives are contained within each Academy with choices geared toward specific college and career goals. While Academy electives are required if students are to receive a certificate from each Academy, these electives may be taken by all students. Academy students also participate in “yellow bus tours”, job shadows, and mentor/protégé programs that give students direct access and exposure to working professionals. The Academy programs are supported by a community-based advisory board that supports each program and student.

It is expected that in any future renovation/construction project, the Academy programs

will be retained and expanded in order to the goals of maintaining smaller learning communities, relating learning to the outside world, and encouraging the development of community connections.

Co-curriculars

In 2010, both Pittsfield and Taconic High Schools were awarded a competitive three-year Twenty-first century after-school programming grant. This grant gives students access to a range of supervised after-school programs that support the development of academic and social skills, and foster civic engagement through service projects. In addition, PHS continues to offer a range of co-curricular clubs and activities (such as student government, Best Buddies, and SADD) and a full complement of MIAA-sanctioned athletic teams at the varsity and junior varsity levels. It is expected that any new school construction will include appropriate resources and spaces for these co-curricular options.

Summer – Expanded Year:

The Pittsfield Public Schools continue to expand its summer programming and raise expectations that summer learning can be used to provide remediation, enrichment, and transitional supports. In recent years, programs have been developed to offer students opportunities for credit recovery after receiving low course grades and/or having excessive class absences. Both direct instruction and virtual options (Plato Learning System) have been employed to support a range of course options for students. In addition, several transition programs for students moving from grades 5 to 6, 8 to 9, and 9 to 10 have been developed to ensure that students are provided with the additional academic, social, and behavior supports necessary for successful promotion. Recent grants, such as Community Service Learning and the Mass Grad Initiative, have been applied to offer families low or no cost options for these summer opportunities.

Transportation Policies

High school students who live more than two miles from school are bused, and middle and elementary students who live more than a mile and one-half from school are bused. Kindergarten students who live more than one-half mile from school are bused. These distances exceed the state requirements. In addition, transportation is provided in situations that are determined to be hazardous. Appropriate transportation shall be provided to pupils in special education classes. Subject to appropriate authorization, paid transportation may be available for students not meeting the above requirements. Such transportation will be available within the limits of existing seating capacity on established routes. Bus transportation will be limited to public thoroughways.

Functional and Spatial Relationships and Adjacencies

When the Visioning Team met in 2007 to shape the high school of the future, several key concepts were emphasized as goals in a new or remodeled school. They include the following key words and descriptors:

Integrated: The school is organized so that different subject areas, including career-tech and various academic-content areas, can be interrelated. This will be achieved by more closely linking (through building design) courses and programs in a way that allows interdisciplinary learning and application. This integration of courses and programs will create a coherent set of connected and visibly interrelated programs.

Application: The school spaces are organized so that learning can be related to the world outside of school through the immediate and direct application of knowledge. Thus, laboratory, project, common, and workspaces are important to future design. These spaces will support open ended, active and project based learning experiences in both the short and longer term.

Flexible: Spaces are designed to support personalized learning paths for students and may be changed and altered in real time as schedules, programs, and best practices change. This arrangement enables the staff to use the design of the building to the school to adapt and respond to the needs of each student.

Relevant, Personalized: Enabling the development of relationships between students and teachers is critical to supporting student engagement, goal setting, and college/career aspirations. Thus, the development of smaller learning communities (professional learning teams) is included as part of the school plan. These smaller learning communities are organized by grade level, content strand, or academy pathway.

Accessible: All opportunities are available for all students, reflecting the fact that our high schools are microcosms of the greater community and society at large. Thus, regardless of their program or pathways, language, race, economic status, or range of abilities, all students are seamlessly connected to the educational opportunities within the building. All programs are fully integrated into the fabric of the school without the separation by department (content area) that is often found in traditional high schools.

Collaborative: It is important that teachers work together in curriculum development, analyzing student work, sharing best practices, team teaching, and participating in school decisions. Thus, spaces for this collaborative work are part of the school design. Similarly, it is important that students have an equal opportunity to develop those 21st century skills of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity – all requiring opportunities for working together, sharing, presenting, and showcasing. Spaces for this work are included in classrooms, academies, smaller learning communities, and in the school common spaces.

Technology Integration: Pittsfield's participation in the state-wide Virtual Learning Grant clarifies the future reality in which technology will be an integral part of a high school student's experience. That technology is integrated into classrooms to support instruction and into common workspaces throughout the school. In addition virtual labs, which link students to other high schools, colleges, and virtual providers, are included into the design. Ultimately, technology will be integrated in a meaningful and transparent manner into all aspects of education.

Administration: The administration, including counseling staff, are easily accessible and welcoming to students and the public. Thus, there is a public community coordinator to support warm reception of students, families, and community members.

Administrative teams are located strategically throughout the school facility to support on-time academic, social, and behavioral supports.

Health and Wellness: The school building promotes the health and wellness of students and staff. With the recent award of the Federal PEP Grant, we will infuse our system with resources, curriculum, and training to support positive healthful eating and exercise habits. Daily opportunities for physical exercise are included into the school design through fitness rooms, walking paths and tracks, and gymnasium spaces.

Basic Needs: The school building supports environmental conditions in which air lighting, temperature control, and acoustics are of the very best quality, and natural and green products and technologies are fully incorporated.

Security and Visual Access Requirements

In the past five years, both Taconic and Pittsfield High Schools have been upgraded with the latest security devices including electronic card access and internal camera monitors. In addition, all schools in Pittsfield have developed emergency response plans in concert with FEMA and MEMA – with leadership teams completing online ICS certification. While these efforts have dramatically improved the safety and security of our schools, neither high school was constructed with modern safety, traffic, or security procedures in mind. It is expected that the new school will have clearly-defined traffic patterns, entry/egress systems, lines of sight, cameras, and other features as recommended by both FEMA and MEMA. District personnel, architectural designers, and emergency experts will work together to ensure that all necessary safety and security features are included in the school renovation/construction.

Community Access

The Pittsfield Public Schools continue to share a very positive partnership with the City of Pittsfield, which owns the school buildings. Therefore schools are and will continue to be available for community use. Some of the current uses of the schools are: adult training programs; community recreational sports leagues; community and neighborhood meetings; and community theatre performances.

New construction and renovation plans at Pittsfield and Taconic High Schools will include provisions for community use. In addition to being afforded access to the facilities community members are encouraged to be involved in and volunteer at the schools as content experts, tutors, mentors, and guides. The District will continue to promote learning that connects students with the community through internships and service learning projects.

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