

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

April 10, 2019

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education
From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools
Subject: Gender-neutral Bathrooms (03-12-19-01)

Question

During Public Comments, Ms. Dixon requested information and cost analysis regarding making the bathrooms in our schools gender neutral, including the possible retrofitting of existing bathrooms and the development of gender-neutral bathrooms in all forthcoming new construction. Ms. Dixon also suggested that staff ask school communities regarding their feedback on this topic.

Response

It is a current standard in newly constructed schools, as well as in existing schools (as requested), to provide single-occupant, gender-neutral toilet rooms. The single-occupancy toilet rooms allow for unrestricted access to a bathroom that contains a toilet stall with partition for privacy and a hand-washing sink. The toilet stall partition is provided due to existing safety and security protocols that intend to limit situations that would allow students to lock themselves in an isolated room. The current average cost to retrofit a restroom in an existing school is approximately \$25,000. This work typically involves expansion of existing staff restrooms into adjacent spaces.

Several concepts have been explored to convert the larger, separated group toilet rooms into gender-neutral configurations. While many configurations of existing restrooms exist, a common theme in converting many of these toilet rooms would involve replacing partial-height toilet partitions with full-height partitions, floor-to-ceiling partitions, and replacing urinal fixtures with standard toilets. A less-costly option for consideration would be to create two gender-neutral group restrooms by converting each side of the existing girls' and boys' side of a typical eight-fixture bathroom layout (Attachment). This concept may not be ideal from a safety and security standpoint; however, it does provide multiple single-user toilet options. This level of conversion is estimated to cost approximately \$40,000 to \$50,000 per combined restroom area.

An option to create multiple single-user toilet rooms and maintain a high level of safety and security has been explored; however, to create these configurations in existing schools would be cost prohibitive. This level of conversion would consist of a significant change in building infrastructure, plumbing, floor slabs, walls, and ceilings. This type of restroom configuration would have to be explored and incorporated in connection with major capital projects.

As projects move forward, staff will engage school communities for appropriate feedback. We carefully will consider all comments and information as part of the process.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Andrew M. Zuckerman, chief operating officer, at 240-740-3050 or Mr. Seth P. Adams, director, Division of Construction, at 240-314-1000.

JRS:AMZ:sro

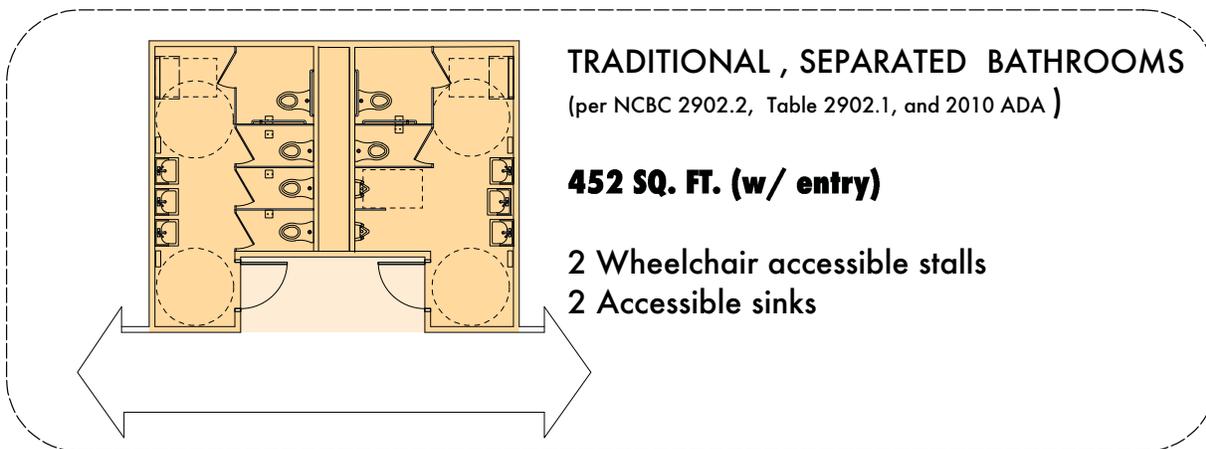
Attachment

Copy to:

Dr. Navarro
Dr. Statham
Dr. Zuckerman
Mr. Civin
Dr. Johnson
Ms. Diamond
Mr. Turner
Mr. Adams
Mr. Song
Ms. Webb

8 FIXTURE LAYOUT

BASED ON 350 PERSON BUSINESS OCCUPANCY
OR 200 - 240 PERSON EDUCATIONAL OCCUPANCY



SINGLE USER TOILET ROOMS

(per NCBC 2902.2, Table 2902.1, and 2010 ADA)

50% OF ROOMS ARE ACCESSIBLE PER NCBC 1109.2

335.5 SQ. FT.

116.5 SF LESS THAN
TRADITIONAL BATHROOM

