

Architects Outline Roof Options for New School

By ANN WISHART
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Berkshire Schools Board of Education members thoroughly discussed roof options for the district's new all-grade building at their meeting April 15.

Rusty Walker, principal with the architectural firm Holabird & Root, LLC, of Chicago, and architect Jay Crafton talked for much of their presentation about the advantages of low-pitch roofs for the various sections of the school they are designing.

Crafton told the board and a few visitors shingles have a short life expectancy and a standing seam roof would be very expensive. He recommended using a membrane cover for the roof and interior gutters, adding roof drainage could be discussed at a later date.

"We will develop and navigate that as we develop the details," he said.

Crafton used the blackboard to make his point, saying flat roofs traditionally have maintenance problems and leaks are hard to track and repair.

A high-pitched roof is wasted space that requires a fire suppression system as well as ventilation and heat, he said.

A low-pitched roof with a membrane surface will allow material flexibility along the 300-to-400-foot-long branches of the building where the construction is a mix of metal and wood, he said.

Board member John Manfredi said he has been thinking the school would have a metal roof, which has a life expectancy of about 50 years.

"As an architect, I love a standing seam roof," Walker said, adding cost is always a factor.

Michael Scaparotti, project executive with ICON LLC, a construction-management-at-risk company in Cleveland, said many schools have been budget-challenged and chose shingle, but it is not a good choice in areas where temperatures drop below zero degrees.

A membrane roof has a 25- to 30-year warranty and adding battens will give it the appearance of a metal roof, he said.

Membrane costs about \$8 per square foot compared to metal at about \$15 per square foot, Scaparotti said.

Crafton said the roof spans of the building are so long, a metal roof would be very heavy and require more structural support throughout the building.

Because the state requires all climate control to be inside the building, no one will need to walk on the roof for maintenance, Walker said.

He went on to talk about the center of the school, which will hold gyms, an auditorium and dining areas.

"The auditorium has fixed seating for 350," he said, adding it can be expanded into the dining area to accommodate up to 600.

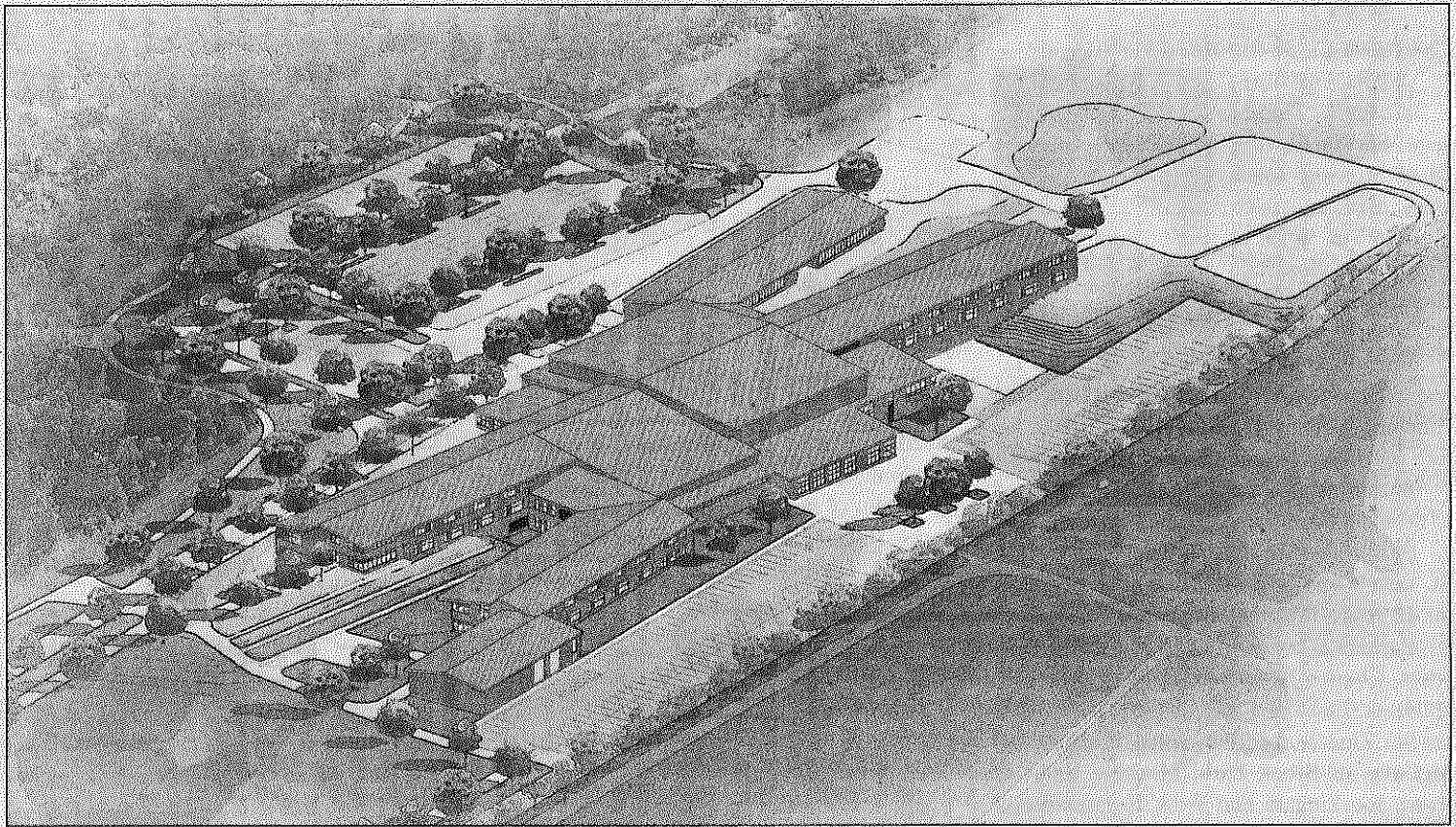
"We're looking for ways to get spaces to do as many jobs as possible," Walker said.

The end of each of the four wings will be dedicated to project-based learning.

The appearance of the 225,000-square-foot building for grades pre-kindergarten to 12th has been at the forefront of the design.

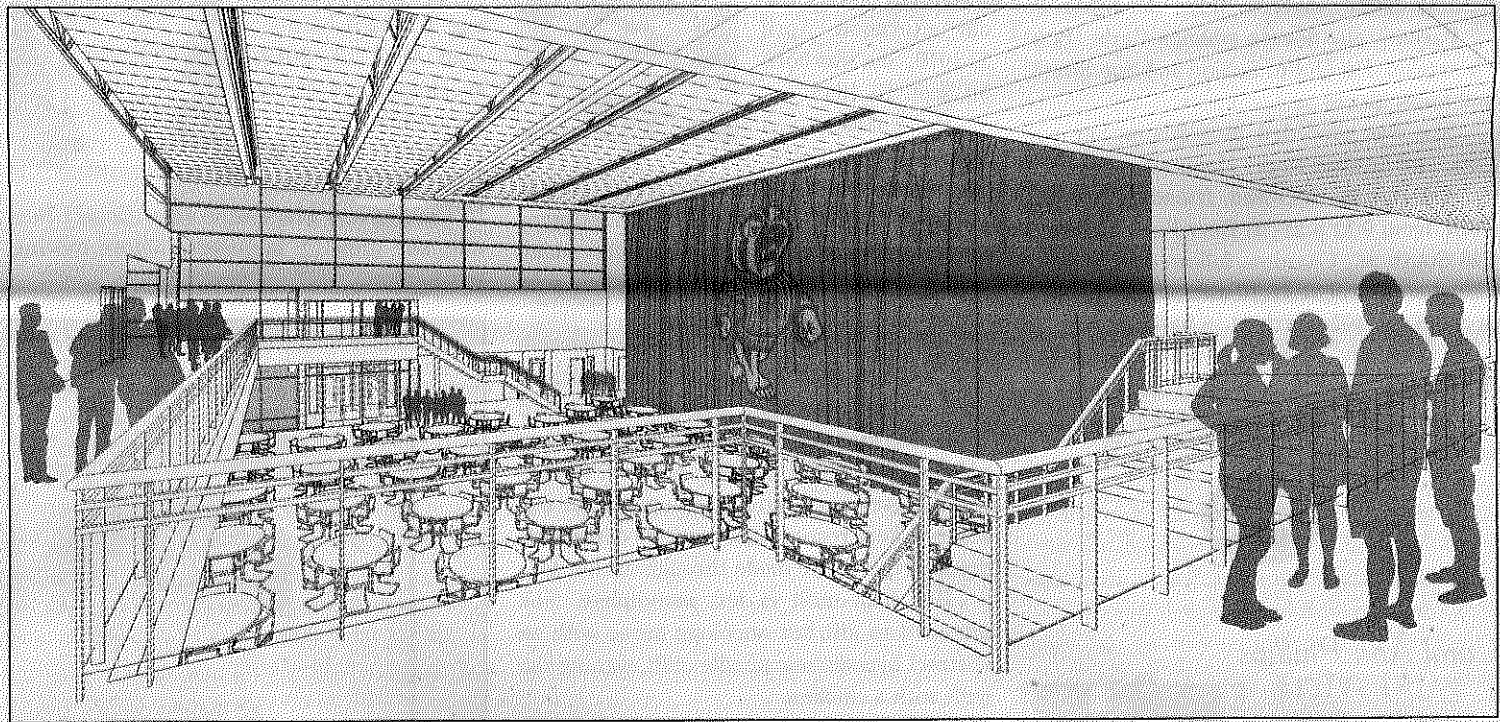
"How do we not make it a behemoth or an eyesore?" he asked.

Because it is being built into the hill on the Kent State University - Geauga campus north of Burton Village, landscaping will be important to make sure it looks like it belongs here, Walker said.



Plans for Berkshire's all-grade school were discussed by representatives from architectural firm Holabird & Root, LLC, of Chicago. (Final #4)

SUBMITTED



The vignette of the dining area of Berkshire's all-grade school shows how the area can be opened to expand seating in the auditorium, right. (Final #8)

SUBMITTED

With that in mind, he recommended cladding the building in red and cream-colored brick and masonry similar to that used on the area's historic homes and barns.

"We will draw from that tradition and use warm red brick to identify it as a school. I think it's going to be really handsome and fit right in (with local architecture)," he said.

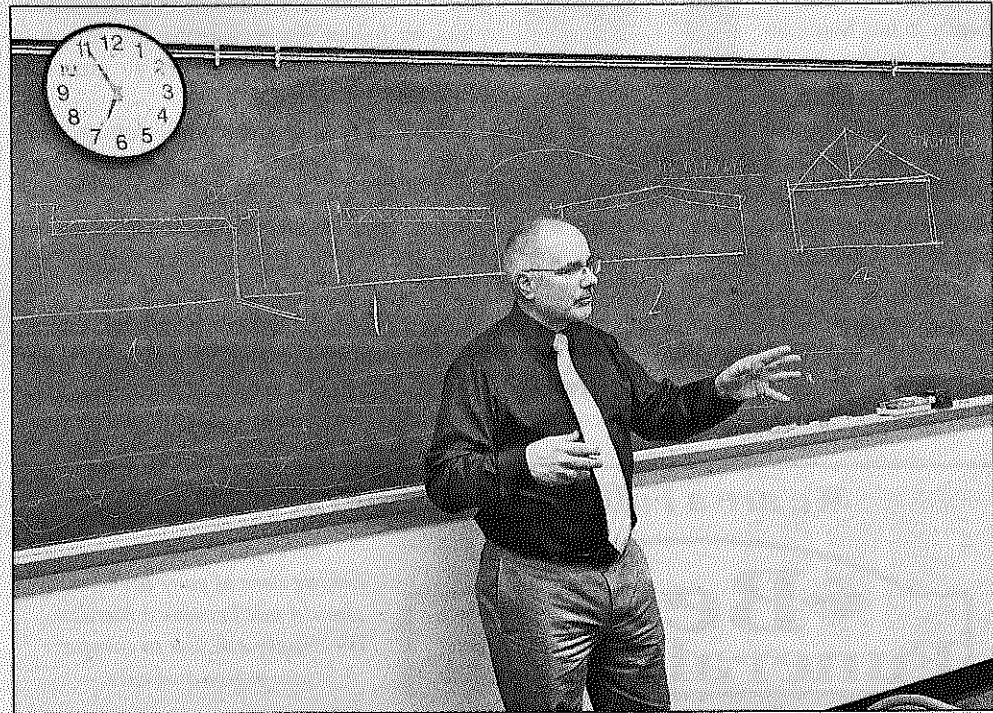
Security will include camera systems, said Superintendent John Stoddard.

Visitors to the school will enter the vestibule where cameras will observe all angles and the visitor will have to present a state-issued ID, he said.

If an individual is flagged, the system will alert the office personnel and the principal, the school resource officer and Stoddard.

In addition, a lockdown can be triggered from the office and all students and staff can exit from the far ends of the wings, he said.

The May 13 board meeting will begin at 6 p.m. at Ledgemont Elementary School, 16200 Burrows Road in Thompson Township.



Architect Jay Crafton talked about the advantages of a low-pitched roof for the all-grade school during the Berkshire Schools Board of Education meeting April 15. He recommended sketch #2.

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