

As our community is aware, Dunwoody High School (DHS) is scheduled for a renovation and expansion funded by eSPLOST V. DHS was built for a capacity of 1,505 students. DHS currently has about 600 students over that capacity and, according to DeKalb County School District (DCSD) projections dated November 29, 2018, we are projected to be about 840 (i.e., 243 additional students) students over our current capacity in the 2021-2022 school year.

The Construction Advisory Committee (CAC) for DHS, which is comprised of Ms. Cole (DHS principal) and five DHS parents, recently had its preliminary design meeting with multiple representatives of both DCSD's construction team and the architecture firm retained for this project. The project is now in the schematic design phase. It is our understanding that DCSD is proposing to increase its investment in the DHS expansion project to meet updated capacity projections and to address increases in construction costs in the area. It is important to note that the expanded project is not for 1,000 "new" students (as we have heard mentioned from time to time in the community), but rather is intended to accommodate the 600 excess (over capacity) students that already are attending DHS, as well as the additional population growth of 200-300 students that DHS is projected to receive over the next few years.

While the project design is just beginning, CAC representatives were able to see some initial concepts and are encouraged by these discussions. Some specific items discussed relating to project scope were the following:

1. While the project scope now proposes 41 new classrooms (as opposed to the 26 classrooms initially proposed) for Board approval, these classes are not limited to any specific type of classroom and can include rooms like science rooms, chorus, band, health, math, drama, etc. as dictated by the needs and requests of the school.
2. The DCSD team and architect are taking into account specific requests from the DHS principal and staff related to needs within the school.
3. The project intends to bury the retention pond and add surface parking over that area, adding approximately 120 to 160 parking spaces. This will greatly increase the overall ratio of parking spaces available on site, reducing the amount of parking required in adjacent neighborhoods.
4. The project includes providing artificial turf over the practice field at DHS. This will further improve an area that the Dunwoody community has put substantial recent investment into by providing new bleachers, lighting, track surface, and fencing.
5. The project will include expansion of the media center at DHS.
6. The project will include expansion of (or replacement of) the cafeteria at DHS.
7. The project will include expansion of (or replacement of) the kitchen at DHS.
8. The project will eliminate all trailers at DHS, by providing new permanent classrooms.
9. The project will provide much needed new offices and meeting space for administrators, counselors and school staff.
10. In designing the project, the architect is trying to improve the flow of the school. Among other things, this should help to distribute the student population more evenly throughout the school, which should decrease congestion in certain areas during class changes, etc.
11. Subject to approval of the board, the budget for the project will be increased to accommodate the increased scope.

DCSD's intent to shift additional SPLOST dollars to DHS (above what was originally planned) will allow the project to meet future projections and more adequately address common area spaces for the students and teachers in our DHS community. Since DCSD has decided that changes to the scope of various projects are appropriate in light of the recent projections, and due to the increased construction costs in our area, we understand that the DHS project, as well as other projects included in eSPLOST V, are anticipated to be presented to the Board of Education in May and brought for a vote in June. With respect to DHS, we understand that the Board will have before it at that time for a vote both the change of scope and an increased budget.

We look forward to continuing to stay a part of this process, and we hope to have full support in helping to make the most of this considerable investment into Dunwoody High School.

Sincerely,

DHS CAC – Principal Cole, David Levy, Kelly Clinch, Chad Griffith, Randi Siegel, Louise Headland