



## School Matters

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### November School Bond Vote Requested

At the April 1 meeting of the Davie County Board of Commissioners, Superintendent Hartness and architects Clark Pierce and Wesley Curtis, presented the schematic design for one new high school and repurposing plan for the current campus. A video recording of this meeting will be posted [here](#) later this week. Dr. Hartness asked the BOC to place a school bond on the November 2013 ballot to allow the people of Davie County to decide on one new high school. He stressed that the solution to solve this issue has been developed as a result of input from students, staff, parents and community members. One new high school has never been voted upon by the citizens of Davie County. The schematic design has been posted on the [Facilities Update](#) page on the district web site for several weeks.

After the architects presented the design and repurposing plan, Dr. Hartness summarized the proposal, the costs associated, and options for financing. This summary and next steps can be accessed [here](#). The Board of Education has already committed \$2 million of existing resources and NC Lottery revenues to the project. Dr. Hartness asked the Board of Commissioners to stand by their previous commitment of \$5 million to solving the high school issue. These two commitments would reduce the tax burden on citizens and result in a total school bond just over \$49 million.

The Board of Education will commit \$200,000 annually, beginning in 2016, toward the debt service for the new school using NC Lottery revenues. Dr. Hartness also pointed out that almost \$700,000 in debt roll off in 2016 could be applied to the project if the commissioners chose to use those resources for school construction. These commitments can further reduce the overall tax burden related to paying for school facilities.

At the conclusion of the design presentation and summary, Dr. John McConnell, CEO of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, spoke to the commissioners about the importance of a new high school to Davie County. WFBMC has recently invested over \$100 million in Davie County, and will open a new hospital and medical facility in the fall of 2013. This new facility will replace the hospital that opened in Mocksville in 1956, the same year Davie County High School opened. Dr. McConnell stated that, "The best investment we can make today, in addition to the hospital at the intersection of Interstate 40 and 801, is a new high school for Davie County." We thank Dr. McConnell for bringing a new hospital to our county, for his support of Davie County Schools, and for his public support of investing in one new high school for our students.

The Board of Commissioners included this presentation on their agenda as an information item only, and we did not anticipate a vote on the issue that night. We hope they will take action on the request for a November school bond at their next meeting. A successful bond referendum in November 2013 will allow the new school to open in the fall of 2016. Any delay past November 2013 will delay the opening of the school to fall of 2017.

There was overwhelming support for the plan presented at the meeting. Over 150 people were packed inside and outside of the commissioners' meeting room. During the public comment section of the meeting, 26 citizens spoke to the commissioners. All but three of those citizens spoke in strong favor of the request to vote on the issue in November. We want to thank the Board of Commissioners for waiving their public comment time limit of 20 minutes, and hearing from all citizens who signed up to speak. A solution has been developed and presented, and we strongly encourage the commissioners to put this issue on the ballot for voters to decide in November 2013.

Sincerely,



Darrin L. Hartness, Ed. D.  
Superintendent

