

Breaking ground on future Dover 'centerpiece'

Ceremony marks beginning for new high school

By **Jamie-Leigh Bissett**
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DOVER — It may have been gray outside, but Capital School District Superintendent Dr. Michael Thomas said there was "sunshine in the hearts" of all the district, city and county officials who on Tuesday officially broke ground on the new Dover High School on Del. 8.

"What a wonderful, glorious day," Dr. Thomas said. "We've had a long wait to get here, but it was worth every bit of effort."

Along with Dr. Thomas, the members of the Capital School District Board of Education, city, state and county elected officials and current and future Dover High students were on hand for the ceremony.

Some students, like juniors Stephan Zelaya and Stephanie Lee, were impressed with the artist rendering of the new school, but were bummed they would not be around to utilize it.

"I'm jealous. This is really nice," Stephan said.

Stephanie, who said her mom graduated from Dover High School, said she will be sad to see the old school go.

"My mom says now 'When I went to school there...' But I won't be able to say that to my kids," she said. "Our memories will be at the old school."

Nevertheless, Stephanie said she plans to come back and visit when the school is complete in the fall of 2014.

Meanwhile, officials, said the new facility will enhance the Dover community.

"This new school will be a shining star, a symbol that shows Dover is a wonderful place to live," said state Sen. Brian J. Bushweller, D-Dover.

"It will be the centerpiece of the community and enhance our sense of pride," Dr. Thomas added.



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Members of the Capital School District Board of Education, including, from left, superintendent Dr. Michael Thomas, president Kiran Clements, vice president Phillip Martino Jr. and board members Raymond Paylor, Kay Dietz-Sass and Tom Keitel, officially broke ground on the new Dover High School Tuesday.

He and the other elected officials also thanked the residents of the district who, despite a lagging economy, approved two referendums, which funded the purchase of the land, and is funding the building of the facility.

"The economy was very tough, but many decided to continue to invest in the community, school and the students, and for that, we thank you," said Rep. Darryl M. Scott, D-Dover.

Dr. Thomas also gave "enormous credit" to the district's referendum committee, which worked "tirelessly" to make sure there were enough votes to pass the \$132 million referendum last spring. He also recognized the Board of Education for its commitment to the project.

Carl Krienen, principal architect for ABHA Architects, which designed the 290,000-square-foot school west of Dover, said the next step in the process is to pre-

pare the site for infrastructure, including underground utilities.

Dr. Thomas said during his speech that folks should start to see the 1,800-pupil school take shape in the fall and winter of this year, and encouraged everybody to keep an eye on the progress in the years to come.

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