

Appoquinimink approves schematic designs for four renovation projects

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Middletown, Del. -

Four Appoquinimink School District buildings will get interior and exterior facelifts starting summer 2009.

The projects, which were part of the district's 2006 referendum, include renovations at Louis L. Redding Middle, Middletown High, and Cedar Lane and Silver Lake elementary schools.

The Appoquinimink School District Board of Education approved schematic designs for the four projects at its Dec. 9 meeting.

Cedar Lane

The Cedar Lane renovations are designed by ABHA Architects of Wilmington.

The school needs fire sprinklers, water and sewer tie-ins and handicap-accessible bathrooms. The heating ventilation and air conditioning system, and the boilers and chiller need to be replaced.

Bob Hershey, buildings and facilities supervisor for the district, added in an email message that, "Cedar Lane is going to undergo a total interior renovation to include the classrooms, the main office, ceilings, floors, doors and hardware. The school will be connected to public water and sewer and a fire sprinkler system."

Scott Lester, principal architect with ABHA, said the school has no sprinklers currently, but it does have fire walls placed throughout the building.

He said the classrooms will receive new plastic laminates, including casework, bookshelves and cubbies.

Donna Kolakowski, principal of CLE, said they will be happy with the upgrades to the main office, which will include an additional bathroom for faculty members and the reconfiguration of the front desk.

"I like that the nurse's office is closer to the front [of the office]," she said. "It looks like a much better use of space and we appreciate the extra bathroom. We only have one bathroom now."

Hershey said the roof will also receive upgrades, as it has been having leak problems. He expects repairs to be made to the roof rather than replace it entirely, which was the original plan.

"This project will be significantly under budget," he said. "We can cope with the roof and save a lot of money and time."

Hershey said the office and boiler room renovations will begin in summer 2009, followed by the classroom renovations. The west wing of classrooms will be renovated

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first, followed by the north wing.

He said because the renovations will run through the fall, students will remain in one wing while the other is being renovated. The renovated portion of the building will be closed off to the rest of the school.

The Board of Education will discuss at a later meeting how the classroom reconfigurations will be handled. Cedar Lane should see a decrease in student enrollment when Bunker Hill Elementary School opens in fall 2009.

Hershey said the construction should not be disruptive to the classrooms that are in use.

Redding

The Redding renovations were also designed by ABHA Architects.

Lester said the renovations at Redding are primarily site work, including the addition of another bus parking lot and parking by the school's auditorium. There will be separate pick-up and drop-off areas to enhance safety.

RMS Principal Matt Burrows said, "Bus parking in front will be better and parking along the auditorium will also be nice."

Hershey said another sidewalk will be added for students who walk to and from school.

Greg Tulowitzky, transportation supervisor for the district, said the additional bus parking is "a vast improvement over what is there now."

Lester said the two locker rooms off of the gymnasium will be renovated, including the toilet rooms.

"Each locker room will have 48 lockers," he said. "There is leftover space, which could be used for storage."

Silver Lake

Jerry Rozanski, principal architect at R.G. Architects based in Odessa, said the renovations to Silver Lake include expanding the office area and building a covered entryway into the school.

"We are completely demolishing the existing administration space," he said. "We are taking out two classrooms, but we are putting one back. It will be a much safer entrance [to the school]."

The two classrooms closest to the entrance of the building and a hallway will be demolished and replaced with a conference room, reception area, and finance, principal's office and assistant principal's offices.

The current reception space, principal and assistant principal offices, nurse's office, copy and break room area will be turned into a kitchenette, copy and sorting space, book storage, break room, intervention classroom, guidance office and nurse's suite with a bathroom. This area will have two to three additional bathrooms.

"The other part of the plans is to add two covered areas," Rozanski said. "One just outside of the gym and one at the entrance to the school. If it's raining, someone could stand there to wait."

Other improvements to the school include replacement of the cafeteria floors, and a new partition to separate the gym and cafeteria.

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Middletown High

Buck Simperts Architects and Associates, Inc., of Wilmington designed the renovations to Middletown High School.

A new animal science lab for the agriculture science department will be constructed, and the construction trades lab will be expanded to the existing agriscience spaces to accommodate student demand for those courses. A science lab will be included and an aquaculture program, which is fish farming, will be brought into the area as well.

Chris Donahue of Buck Simperts said a structure that resembles a red barn from the exterior will be constructed for the agriscience department. The barn will be next to the existing greenhouse where the classroom trailers have been.

“It fits pretty good with the existing school and it’s a good blend,” he said. “This is a super ag lab with a lot of space.”

Donahue said they are looking at adding some fencing between the barn and the parking lot because there may be some farm animals brought to the school for instruction.

He said the family and consumer science area also will be upgraded to serve the culinary arts program.

MHS Principal Donna Mitchell was pleased with the design.

“This creates a real nice cluster for each program,” she said. “The aquaculture program and science lab are extremely exciting.”

Simperts said the existing security system and fire alarm will be replaced. Also, ADA accessibility issues will be addressed, including adding sinks to handicap stalls.

The Board of Education will vote on the design development documents at its Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2009, meeting.