

Appoquinimink's proposed Odesa campus begins to take shape

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Middletown, Del. —



A preliminary rendering of the elementary school proposed for a future campus on Old State Road near Odessa. Design by ABHA/BSA+A, LLC.

It's been nearly nine months since residents in the Appoquinimink School District overwhelmingly approved a referendum that will allow the district to build a brand-new elementary school and early childhood center near Odessa.

Since passing the referendum, the district has set its sights on getting the buildings designed and coming up with specific ways the building can enhance 21st-century learning.

The architectural design team ABHA/BSA+A, LLC, is designing the 840-student elementary school and 330-student early childhood center, which will one day sit on Old State Road just outside of Odessa.

Superintendent Dr. Tony Marchio said district officials and the architects have met with teachers and administrators over the past three months to brainstorm ideas for the educational specifications of the buildings.

"We've gotten a lot of input from a lot different sources, and now it's just incorporating all that input into something that's a little more workable," he said.

Assistant Superintendent Marion Proffitt said it is important that the district take into account how education may change in the future.

"We never want to get away from the fact that the program has to be the guiding factor," she said. "But now we realize the way the world changes so much, that we also have to give ideas on spaces that can change with the times. They can't just be for the here and

now. They have to have the capabilities of moving and servicing multiple types of programs.”

Marchio said the district wants the buildings to incorporate space and educational tools that will support an emphasis on 21st-century teaching and learning like pod areas similar to Brick Mill and Bunker Hill Elementary Schools, learning streets, small cafés, sound-enhancement systems, smart boards, outside learning spaces, soundproof and operable walls between classrooms and multimedia centers in each classroom.

“I think we’re going to have a real good design when we’re finished,” he said, “and I think it’s certainly going to lend itself to the types of programs and type of instruction we’re looking for.”

Marchio said the district’s Board of Education will approve the educational specifications and the schematic design of the building in the next few months.

While the district has not purchased the property on Old State road yet, the total cost of the 273-acre site is \$10 million.

“We are waiting for our funds to be released from the state and should close within the next few weeks,” Marchio said.

Bob Hershey, buildings and facility supervisor for the district, said at August Board of Education meeting construction on the buildings is proposed for spring of next year.

“If that occurs, they’ll open [the schools] in 2012,” he said.



A preliminary rendering the early childhood center proposed for a future campus on Old State Road near Odessa. The renderings may undergo several changes before approved by the Appoquinimink School District’s Board of Education later this year. Design by ABHA/BSA+A, LLC.