

BOARD MEMO

Date: February 18, 2021
For ACTION _____
For INFORMATION X
Board Agenda: Yes x
No _____

FROM: Gerald Mann, Ed.D., Executive Director of Instructional Support
Erika Gulick, Director of Capital Programs, Planning and Design

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Alicia Hart, DBA, PMP, Executive Director of Facilities and Operations

TO: The Honorable Meagan Alderton, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Comprehensive Program / Educational Specification Document Draft

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence

Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation

SY 2020-2021 FOCUS AREA:

Focus Area 3: Strategic Plan Implementation

FY 2021 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Facilities Audit Implementation

Outreach to Underserved Communities to Increase Engagement

Improving Customer Relationship Services and Management

SUMMARY:

Comprehensive Program / Educational Specification Presentation:

The Perkins Eastman team has drafted a Comprehensive Program / Educational Specifications (Ed Spec) document that details a plan based on providing flexible spaces to a Connected High School Network. Based on recommendations from the Educational Design Team, School Board Priorities, and programming needs, the Ed Spec document presents a series of overarching themes with key features that have been identified by the EDT and the Perkins Eastman design team as essential to the organization and design of the Connected High School Network.

The document considers both the King Street and Minnie Howard campuses in how they will be organized and function as a connected network, while focusing on the new development requirements at the Minnie Howard campus. Some highlights of the Comprehensive Program / Ed Spec are:

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- Addition of student capacity with approximately 44 new spaces allowing for a minimum of 1,600 students at Minnie Howard
- Promotion of learning communities at both campuses
- Inclusion of athletic and community spaces
- An intentional focus on equity and STEAM
- Early budget analysis

The information the School Board will view in the attached presentation is an overview of the key topics encompassed by this draft. The draft document will be shared with the School Board via a Board Brief on February 19, 2021, with the following proposed timeline for additional feedback:

- February 22, 2021: Staff and Student Engagement
- February 24, 2021: Second EDT Meeting focused on the Comprehensive Program/Ed Spec
- February 25 & 26, 2021: School Board 2x2s to answer questions and gain additional feedback

The School Board is being asked to approve the full Comprehensive Program / Ed Spec document, which includes proposed capacity, an associated list of spaces and budget requirements at its March 4 Board Meeting.

BACKGROUND:

The High School Project began in the summer of 2018 and has progressed steadily throughout the past two and a half years. On January 24, 2019, the School Board voted to continue The High School Project work with a focus on several priorities and a commitment to a multi-option evaluation process. On September 26, 2019, the School Board voted in favor of a Connected High School Network strategy to address Alexandria's future high school capacity needs that included the construction of an expansion to the T.C. Williams High School by building on the fields portion of the Minnie Howard Campus. After over a year of planning work, ACPS hired Perkins Eastman in December 2020, to execute the pre-design and design for the redevelopment of the Minnie Howard Campus.

On January 21, 2021, the project team presented the preliminary analyses/test fits of the school program, fields, and affordable housing to help inform the School Board's decision-making. The preliminary analysis confirmed that it is physically possible to accommodate a school building for a minimum 1,600 students at one time, provide no net loss of fields and public open space, and accommodate all colocated uses currently under consideration including either affordable housing or ACPS/City office use. The work session included a discussion of possible trade offs related to land use and budget.

On February 4, 2021, the School Board voted unanimously to exclude affordable housing as a colocation option on the Minnie Howard campus. Other potential colocation opportunities are being explored.

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In February, the project team received the first draft of the Ed Spec document from Perkins Eastman. The EdSpec document includes site-specific recommendations for the Minnie Howard Campus including proposed capacity, an associated list of spaces and budget requirements. The EdSpec document is currently under review by the appropriate departments.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the memo and all included attachments in order to be prepared to make decisions regarding approval of the full Ed Spec document which encompasses proposed capacity, an associated list of spaces and budget requirements.

IMPACT:

The aforementioned activities and milestones continue to support the progress of the High School Project, and approval of the Ed Spec document will allow the project to move forward.

ATTACHMENTS:

Presentation

CONTACT:

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