

High Point High School Project Update Meeting | April 9, 2025 Questions & Answers

What are the two most likely construction options for the project?

The two most likely construction options for the project are Option 1 and Option 3. Option 1 involves temporarily relocating students and staff to the newly constructed Northern Adelphi Area High School. Once the new facility is complete, the High Point site will be redeveloped, and students will return to the site after construction is finished. On the other hand, Option 3 proposes constructing a new school on the current track area while students continue to attend classes in the existing High Point building during the construction phase.

Has a general contractor been selected for the project?

No, a contractor has not yet been selected. The project is still in the early planning stages. A contractor will be hired after the design is completed and the bid is issued.

What is the impact of lower funding from the state (Blueprint for Education)? How much of a delay in finishing the construction?

The impact of lower funding from the state through the Blueprint for Education program is currently minimal for the High Point project, as the primary funding source consists of general obligation bonds from both the state and the county. Because of this, there is no immediate or direct effect on the project. The construction is still in its early stages, and since the funding is structured over multiple years, the team requests the ability to sell bonds progressively.

Although the future of funding remains uncertain and unpredictable, there is currently no indication that the High Point project is at risk or that there will be a delay in its completion.

What amenities and features will be included in the new school?

The new school will feature a wide range of modern amenities and state-of-the-art learning environments guided by the finalized educational specifications. These include the latest instructional technology, specialized spaces for art, music, and science, as well as potential Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs such as computer science. The design emphasizes flexible and collaborative learning spaces that also support students' social and emotional needs. Additionally, the school will be a high-performing, energy-efficient, and environmentally sustainable building, targeting LEED certification. It will incorporate features like recycled materials, efficient building systems, stormwater management, and waste reduction practices. Outdoor and environmental learning areas are also being planned as an integral part of the educational experience.

How will county, state, and federal funding cuts impact the project?

The project is funded by bonds, not directly by federal revenue. However, large revenue cuts could affect debt ceilings, reducing bond availability.

How can I enroll my company as an interested subcontractor?

Bids are issued by the Department of Purchasing and Supply Services and are published on their website at www.pgcps.org/offices/purchasing.

How will the design address the social and emotional needs of the students?

The design of the new school is being carefully planned with a strong focus on addressing the social and emotional needs of students. Both the educational specifications and the design team are approaching the project with a high level of sensitivity to the diverse range of student needs, recognizing that learning occurs in many forms and environments. While specific design details are still in development, the intention is to create a variety of spaces that accommodate different learning and teaching styles. As the process moves forward, there will be more community engagement to ensure the design is tailored specifically to the needs of the High Point student body, supporting their well-being and success.

How and when will community input be integrated in the process of design?

Community input will be integrated into the design process through the formation of a Project Planning Committee (PPC), which will serve as the voice of the community. The committee will be chaired by Principal Chacon, who will select 12 to 13 individuals from the school and community to participate. While the committee itself will be relatively small, there will still be opportunities for broader community engagement, as anyone not selected can share their ideas and feedback with committee members to be brought into discussions. The formation of the PPC is expected to be completed by the end of the month, and community members interested in participating are encouraged to reach out to Principal Chacon.

What features will be in place to accommodate students with physical and emotional disabilities?

The new school will be thoughtfully designed to accommodate students with both physical and emotional disabilities. It will fully comply with all state, local, and federal building codes, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and will use universal design principles to ensure full accessibility throughout the building, even if it is multi-level. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles will also be implemented to enhance safety and visibility across the campus. To support students with social and emotional needs, the school will include specialized spaces such as sensory and calming rooms. The design will carefully consider acoustics, colors, materials, and flexible furniture options to create environments that support diverse learning styles and comfort levels. Spaces like the cafeteria and classrooms will be designed to offer choices in how students engage—whether sitting, standing, or moving around. The design team is also collaborating closely with counseling staff to ensure the school includes dedicated areas that support student well-being, especially in light of increased awareness following the COVID-19 pandemic.

How have school staff and administration needs assessments influenced the building design?

The design of the new school is being directly informed by a thorough needs assessment involving both school staff and administration. The process began with meetings with central office staff to review the educational specifications, followed by detailed sessions with school staff to identify specific needs. These discussions have been conducted department by department, examining spaces line by line to ensure that the final design reflects the unique requirements of High Point High School. For example, the counseling department and science department were consulted, with walkthroughs of their current facilities to identify deficiencies and determine how to improve them in the new building. Specialized programs like aquaponics and hydroponics, which are not offered at every school, are also being considered to ensure they're properly supported. The design process is intentionally iterative, allowing ongoing refinement based on feedback from the Project Planning Committee and the broader school community. Preliminary images shared are only conceptual, with continued input and collaboration expected as the final design takes shape.

Are there plans for the new school design to integrate community events/engagement?

Yes, the new school is being designed with community engagement in mind, recognizing that schools serve as vital hubs for their neighborhoods. The goal is to create a space that is welcoming, approachable, and accessible not only during school hours but also for evening and weekend events. While ensuring safety and security remains a top priority, the design will include thoughtful zoning and controls to allow for community use in a responsible way. This intention is already integrated into the educational specifications and will continue to be a key focus in ongoing design discussions with the community.

How will the school's PTA/PTO be involved in the design process?

The school's PTA/PTO will be involved in the design process through participation in the Project Planning Committee (PPC). A representative from the PTA or PTO is expected to be part of this group, which will work directly with the design team from Grimm+Parker. During committee meetings, the design team will present their plans, and each member, including the PTA/PTO representative, will be invited to provide feedback based on their unique perspective. Parents, for example, can share insights on what they want for their children's school experience, while other committee members—like teachers or athletic staff—will offer feedback from their respective areas of expertise. This collaborative approach ensures that a broad range of voices help shape the final school design.

If the school chooses the option to remain onsite during construction, what will be in place to ensure safety (environmental and physical) of students and staff?

The construction zone would be strictly separated from the occupied school areas, with its own dedicated entrance and clearly defined boundaries to prevent student or staff access. The proximity of the construction, about 70 feet from the existing school, will require firm limits and isolation protocols. Additionally, all environmental safety standards will be followed, including stormwater management and sediment and erosion control, in full compliance with applicable regulations. The final decision on the construction approach will be made after a thorough review of the feasibility study, with input from various departments, and a Board of Education vote expected in June.

Has the architect built other schools for PGCPs? If so, which schools?

Yes, Grimm+Parker has a long-standing history of working with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS). They have designed numerous schools for the district, including Charles Herbert Flowers High School, Dr. Henry A. Wise Jr. High School, Fairmont Heights High School, and the recently opened Ellen Ochoa Middle School. In total, Grimm+Parker has designed well over 20 schools for PGCPS, showcasing extensive experience and a deep familiarity with the district's needs.

How will transportation from state and private merge with upgrades to school site? How will the school and contractor work with the community during construction to address traffic around the community?

Transportation planning for the upgraded school site will carefully integrate both public and private transportation needs, with a strong emphasis on safety and efficiency. The design team is closely analyzing current traffic patterns, including pedestrian and vehicle flow around the busy Powder Mill Road and nearby intersections. Special attention is being paid to pedestrian access, especially for students crossing Coven Road, to ensure their safety. The planning includes separating networks for buses, private vehicles, service vehicles, and pedestrians so that each can operate efficiently without interfering with the others. Additionally, a traffic impact study is being conducted by a professional consultant who will observe current traffic conditions and school operations. The data collected will inform the architectural and civil engineering teams, guiding decisions for improved site circulation and ensuring the final design supports safe, smooth transportation for all users.

Does the plan include two gymnasiums in the school?

Yes. The school will feature a consolidated gym complex with a large main gym, an auxiliary gym, and other fitness spaces.

With current cuts to library funding, will more funds be allocated to have a robust library for the school in the new design and perhaps open to the community to address literacy?

The new building will include a school library to support student learning. However, due to funding constraints, it will not serve as a public library.

How many floors are in the concept versions?

The concept designs for the new school include buildings with either three or four stories, though the four-story sections would be limited in scope to maintain ease of supervision and operational efficiency.

How many dual restrooms are on each level? Will there be gender-neutral bathrooms in the school?

At this stage of planning, the number and specific layout of restrooms—such as how many dual restrooms would be on each level—have not yet been finalized, as the plans have not been developed to that level of detail. Regarding gender-neutral bathrooms, their inclusion will depend on the final version of the educational specifications, which will guide the decision-making process on that matter.