



Board-to-Board

February, 2017

A monthly report from the Albemarle County School Board to the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors

Facilities Implications of High School 2022

Recently, the school division hosted a community input session to discuss *High School 2022*, which is the name of the division's plan to meet new state graduation requirements. While much of that evening's conversations—and the division's strategic planning thus far—focused on curriculum and instruction, a significant element of the high school redesign process is the school facility itself. As a result, the School Board would like to brief the Board of Supervisors on a few of the essential facilities themes we have encountered during this planning process.

Top among our list is the number of students who will be using each high school building throughout the day. The new graduation requirements will see greater numbers of students earning course credit *outside of the school facility* through community-based learning experiences like internships, mentorships, and job-shadowing. This change impacts the school division in two ways. First, placing students requires developing and scaling a robust program of learning opportunities. Second, the number of students who are earning credit outside of the school building could potentially impact the decision for any future high school buildings. Currently, staff is working with the local business and non-profit community to formalize operations and increase the number of opportunities for students.

Our second major theme is the school day schedule. If greater numbers of students are learning in the community, coordinating 1,000+ internships around the high school day will prove very challenging. As a result, if the School Board feels an alternative schedule is appropriate, they would then need to study a concept like a staggered schedule, which would see fewer numbers of students in the physical building at one time, but would increase the total number of hours the school building would be used for instruction. For example, a student who is engaged in community learning opportunities in the morning and early afternoon could attend the physical school building for his or her academic class meetings in the evening. An additional element impacting the school day schedule is a rise in student agency. For some students, a later starting time might help improve academic achievement and engagement.

While not directly linked to the new requirements, virtual learning will play an important role in future facility decisions. Students who are enrolled in a virtual class are either at home, where they require no physical space for that particular course, or they are physically in their home high school, but are taking a course at one of our other high schools virtually. It should also be noted that much of the planning to-date has occurred at the conceptual level. One of the next stages of planning will begin looking at this issue from the classroom level. The central question at the classroom level is: how will the functionality of a traditional classroom need to change in order to meet the demands of contemporary instruction?

School Board website: <http://www2.k12albemarle.org>