

THE OLD vs. THE NEW:

W.T. Woodson Renovation Update

We hope all of you are enjoying your summer. About halfway through the summer of '07, Jim Scutt (PTSA's Renovation Liaison) and I just completed a tour of the school to check on the progress of the renovation along with the FCPS Project Team. From the outside it's hard to see progress, especially when you look at the parking lots and the front of the school. At first glance it looks like they are demolishing the school one brick at a time. But, trust me, there is a method to the madness. FCPS has approximately 130-150 staff and contractors on-site daily. You might also see that weekend work is being done as required.

If you have been following the process, you know they are working on multiple levels, both inside and out of the building. This report will summarize where we are today.

General Information: All instructional classrooms will contain **new** lighting, air and heating systems, double pane windows, mini-blinds, floor tiles, paint, and LCD projectors suspended from the ceilings. (TVs are obsolete and will be removed.)

All new improvements will bring the school up to current local and state codes. One of the most significant code improvements will be a new sprinkler system throughout the school, which Woodson has needed for some years.

Anyone who has traveled the hallways since renovations started has noticed that most, if not all, of the ceilings are exposed. This is necessary as the infrastructure is continually being improved throughout the renovation process. Unfortunately this situation will not improve except over time. This area must remain accessible throughout the stages of the renovation. New ceiling tiles and lighting will be replaced as each new wing is turned over to the school. Therefore, it is likely that in much of the school the ceilings will continue to be exposed this school year as well, except for the new Science and English wings (described below) that will be delivered this fall.

Heating and Air Conditioning has been a main concern to students and staff. The old system will be replaced—however, it must be phased in over the next year or so, and so both old and new systems will be operational this coming school year. As each section of the school is fully renovated and turned over to the school, the new system will be put in operation. Students and staff should be prepared for continued inconsistent heat and air conditioning as one system is brought on line and the other taken off line.

New Science Wing: This wing could be the centerpiece of the new and improved Woodson. It will offer our students a state-of-the-art 40,000-square-foot facility. Each new classroom will be equipped with new cabinets, shelves, sinks, desks, work tables, and code specific ventilation systems. Classrooms will share secured prep rooms where teachers can safely store lab materials. This wing will also house a new Lecture Study Hall with flexible seating to suit meeting needs and portable dividers that can create three separate rooms when necessary. **Milestone:** The Project Team hopes to turn this section over to the school in late November 2007.

Fine Arts Wing: This wing was started toward the end of the school year. The new wing is taking shape as concrete was poured for the foundation in the last few weeks. **Milestone:** Anticipated delivery date to WTW administration is expected for late spring of 2008.

D Hall 1 & 2: A considerable amount of attention has been paid to this section. This section will house the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, English and ESOL classrooms. One of the most impressive improvements in this section is the seven (7) new classrooms set aside for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing students at Woodson. The **English Department** will also benefit from the additional classroom space set aside for the yearbook and school newspaper staff. Teachers will also enjoy a large teacher prep/workroom. **Milestone:** Expected delivery date is late November 2007.

New Administrative Offices/Student Services Wing: This new addition is on schedule and will include Guidance Offices as well as the new main entrance to the school. **Milestone:** Expected delivery date, late spring of 2008.

Parking Lots: The parking situation will not change and will remain essentially as it was at the end of the school year. Student/faculty parking off of Whitacre should see no significant changes during the school year. Faculty/Coaches parking along the opposite side of the school will remain closed except for construction vehicles. **Milestone:** The Faculty/Coaches parking area is expected to be turned over to the school in late spring 2008.

Athletic Facilities:

1. Auxiliary Gym: New ceramic tiles have already been laid in the auxiliary gym. When completed, it will have new windows, a new gym floor and a new sound system and acoustical tiles. **Milestone:** Delivered to the administration in late fall, early winter 2007.

2. Weight Room: Ground has been broken on the new weight room. The weight room will include a coaches office and a new Driver Education classroom ("The Rock" has been successfully moved). New boys and girls locker rooms, showers, team rooms and trainer's room have also been added to the athletic department. **Milestone:** Expected delivery date is late spring 2008.

3. Gymnastics/Dance Room: A new multi-purpose room off the gym. **Milestone:** Delivery is expected in winter of 2007.

4. Home and Visitor Bleachers: All new bleachers are being installed and should be ready for the fall season. They will be up to code, with an all aluminum structure, and provide handicapped accessible seating.

Band Concession Stand/Ticket Booth: This structure has been built and will house both the concession stand and the ticket booth. The Athletic Booster Club concession stand and the upper level ticket booth will get a face lift but are not scheduled to be replaced

Milestone: Delivery date for the bleachers and concession stand is expected in late August 2007

5. Stadium Lighting System/New Press Box and Parking Lot Lights: Scheduled for the summers of 2008 and 2009.

PTSA Future plans: Robert Robyak, FCPS Liaison for Renovation, has agreed to brief members of the PTSA sometime in early October on the progress and expected milestones during the school year. The exact date is yet to be determined.

Plans are also being made to offer tours of the Science Wing and D Halls 1&2 before they are turned over to the school. The tours will be hosted by Mr. Elliott and members of the renovation project team. Anticipate this to take place sometime in October/November.

I know it can be frustrating to deal with the hassles, especially for those of you whose children will graduate without reaping any of the benefits of “suffering” through the renovation years, but I really believe the end result will be worth the problems. Hang in there! Finally, please do not hesitate to email either of us if you have any questions or concerns about the renovation.

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