

Timeline set for Champion school construction

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By BOB COUPLAND , Tribune Chronicle

CHAMPION - As students and staff return to school in a few weeks, they will notice the earth moving beneath their feet.

Land will begin to be dug up as work begins in September for Champion School District's new PK-8 school complex off state Route 45.

The Board of Education at a special meeting Friday met with Brett Hendricks of BSHM Architects Inc. and William Schurman of Hammond Construction on moving forward with the \$31.3 million project and preparing for a community presentation 7 p.m. Aug. 22 at the Champion High School auditorium.

School officials said a groundbreaking ceremony is being planned for Sept. 12.

Schurman said this month, the contractors will be seeking bids and taking part in the design and development with BSHM. He said actual "earth work" will take place mid-September through November on the 21-acre site directly south of the high school complex. Foundation work and construction of the building will begin in late March 2017.

Schurman said when the building opens in August 2018, abatement and demolition work of the middle school and Champion Central Elementary buildings also will be taking place once they become vacant.

The Ohio School Facilities Commission is providing \$17.6 million for the building and the local share of \$13.8 million is from a 4.4-mill bond issue passed by district voters.

Hendricks showed videos and drawing site plans of the planned complex with separate sections for the elementary and middle schools, including separate parking lots and drop-off areas for parents. The designs show a bus loop so bus traffic and parent traffic do not go to the same areas. There also will be 100 staff parking spaces around the complex.

"We anticipate a lot of students being dropped off by parents. Currently at the elementary and middle schools there are about 50 students dropped off and picked up each day," Hendricks said.

He said there also will be a 150-foot right turning lane heading north of Route 45 to enter the school's main driveway.

In addition, there will be outdoor learning areas with tables and benches for art, science and other classes.

School officials are finalizing bus drop-off times with high school first, middle school second and elementary third. Superintendent Pamela Hood said starting times and pickup times will remain the same.

Also at Friday's meeting, the board approved paying \$10 for a small parcel of land situated on Ridge Run Drive northwest of the football stadium to be used for the project. The land is vacant.

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