

Champion school complex introduced

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By ROBERT LEBZELTER , Tribune Chronicle

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CHAMPION - Plans for a sprawling \$31.3 million school campus around Champion High School, with two gymnasiums and extended learning centers, was unveiled Monday night.

William A. Schurman, an engineer with Hammond Construction of Canton, and Brett Hendricks, president of BSHM Architects of Youngstown, detailed plans to a group in the Champion High School auditorium.

Hendricks said grades kindergarten to fourth will be in one section, with grades 5 to 8 in another and administration offices between them. To the back will be two gymnasiums, along with locker rooms and music areas. There will be separate areas for parents in the lower and upper grades to drop off their children, separate from buses.

"We can stack almost 190 cars in the queue," he said, promising, "it won't be a Daytona Speedway type of track."

Voters in November approved a 4.4-mill bond issue to raise \$13.8 million, the district's share of the project. The Ohio School Facilities Commission's Facilities Assistance Program will pay \$17.5 million.

While locations have not been determined, also on the campus would be practice fields for soccer, football and track. They would be funded separately. There will also be ample greenery for a playground, Hendricks said.

Classrooms will open into extended learning areas, where students can work on group projects.

Schurman said work should start around March, as soon as weather permits. It should be completed by August 2018 and ready for occupancy.

Also during the summer of 2018, he said the century-old Champion Central Elementary at state routes 305 and 45 and Champion Middle School on Alva Avenue will be demolished.

After the 20-minute presentation, people were invited to pick up copies of renderings of the complex and ask questions.

Champion school board President David Mahan said there was much research to assure the district gets the best school possible.

"I am unbelievably excited," Mahan said after the presentation. "There has been a lot of study, a lot of time for the teachers and administrators. They were going to other districts to see how they do it."

Sue Stingel, a retired Lordstown physical education teacher, said she was thrilled after hearing details of the complex.

"It is fortunate people have come through. People are making an investment in the community for their children," Stingel said.

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