Capacity Planning Committee Summary and Outlook

The Swanson Capacity Planning Committee has been meeting regularly since the beginning of the school year to provide input on space utilization as we prepare to add seven new relocatable units which will house over 25 classroom spaces for the 2016-17 school year. The committee was tasked with formulating recommendations by December 2015 so that the APS Facilities and Purchasing departments could begin their work with sufficient time to be ready for the beginning of the next school year.

Committee representatives include Swanson parents, PTA representatives, elementary feeder school parents, Swanson staff, and members of the APS Facilities Department.

**Swanson Staff**

Bridget Loft, Swanson Principal

Scott McKeown, Swanson Assistant Principal

Beth Sanderson, 6th grade teacher and Co-Instructional Lead Teacher

Ellie Touse, 7th grade teacher

Billie Vaslavsky, French teacher

Debbie Neuhaus-Palmer, 7th grade teacher

Carolyn Sharpe, 7th grade teacher

**APS Families**

Noah Simon, Swanson PTA president

Jennifer Shoji, Glebe & Swanson parent

Kelly King, McKinley parent

Mary Kate Stoller, Tuckahoe parent

Liz Walsh, Tuckahoe & Swanson parent

Lillian Wallace, Barrett & Swanson grandparent

Mary Beth Warner, Taylor & Swanson parent

Miles Mason, Arlington Science Focus parent

Patricia Trapanese, Swanson parent

The committee provided feedback related to:

* Determination of the configuration of the relocatable units.
* Requests for additional classroom spaces.
* Creation of frequently asked questions as a clearinghouse of information for parents, students and Swanson staff to keep stakeholders abreast of the process.
* Advocacy of quality of life features, including the addition of cafeteria space, student lockers, and preservation of trees and outdoor space for team and student use.
* Research and preparation for student safety through use of security cameras, staff entry card readers, and plans for student ingress and egress.
* Dissemination of information to Swanson and feeder school families.
* Analysis of student perspectives on the process.

The committee’s work taken together with Swanson’s instructional needs, plus the considerations of the Facilities Department will result in the placement of four seventh grade teams in seven large relocatable units for the 2016-17 school year. These core team classrooms (English, history, math and special education) will remain in proximity to one another while 7th grade science classes will remain in the main building because of their lab and equipment needs.

In order to help support some of often overlooked space needs, a cafeteria annex will be provided. This space will be able to accommodate 75-100 additional students during lunch in order to remove some of the congestion found in the cafeteria during our lunch MODs. This space, in addition to a unit on the southeast corner of the lawn, will be available to provide an extra space for PE classes to accommodate larger classes.

Finally, in order to accommodate these additional units, Swanson’s existing lower parking lot will be used to house these temporary classrooms. To accommodate staff and parent parking, APS is negotiating an agreement with Westover Baptist Church to lease additional parking during the time that these classrooms are in place.

Once the committee has completed its recommendations, the Finance and Facilities departments will complete the purchasing and placement of units so that our seventh grade teams will be able to take occupancy at the start of the 2016-17 school year. We estimate that these units will be in place until the start of the 2019 school year when the converted Stratford Middle School will open.

If you have any questions, or need further information, visit the Swanson Capacity Planning web page (http://www.apsva.us/Domain/5420 ) or the More Seats for More Students web page (http://www.apsva.us/moreseats) or contact the Swanson Principal, Bridget Loft, at 703 228 5501.