

Help Mt. Hebron (HMH) February Update

This update contains information about the latest renovation plan, the plan's deficiencies, the teachers' concerns and HMH efforts to improve what is being proposed as well as next steps. It is long, but the details are important. Thank you for your continued interest and support.

Upcoming

- There will be a request for emails to public officials in early March.
- Join us in support as we testify before County Executive Ken Ulman on March 6th.
- Read What's Next at the end of this update for more details on how you can help.

Revised Design Concept Presented 1/22/08

Serious flaws in earlier HCPSS' proposed solutions resulted in another new plan.

- Demolish 20,000 square feet of the "English and Performing Arts" area
- Construct a new, separate building (3 levels providing about 50,000 gross square feet) in the demolished area with a fire wall between it and the existing building.
- Provide either a "major" renovation or a "minor" renovation to existing building.
- Some areas of the school would remain untouched.

	General Classrooms	Specialized Classrooms	Total Teaching Stations
	Serves multiple programs e.g., English, Social Studies, Foreign Language	Used only for unique program purposes e.g., "Shop", Dance Studio, Science, Band Room, Weight Room. Note: Main gym counts as 2 classrooms	Any room that can be used as a classroom; HCPSS Ed Specs call for 80
# of classrooms in Existing Building	39	2	64
# of classrooms in 1/22/08 Design Concept	35	32* Erroneously includes Auditorium and Wrestling as classrooms	67* Erroneously includes Auditorium & Wrestling as classrooms
# of proposed classrooms < 700 sf considered inadequately sized for quality teaching	18 classrooms exist in current	—	9 existing classrooms remain ~ 700 sf because they're are untouched by

	building includes 6 slightly above 700 sf		renovation 9 renovated classrooms are specifically designed to be below Ed Spec requirements
Total change in classrooms	- 4	+7	+ 3* Erroneously includes Auditorium and Wrestling as classrooms

This solution, according to HCPSS' calculations, leaves Mt. Hebron 18,400 square feet of program space (approximately 24,000 square feet of gross space) short of the HCPSS 1999 Educational Specifications. Among the greatest problems with the plan:

- 4 existing general classrooms lost,
- Requires 4 portables after construction, portables may be removed during renovation and not returned when completed,
- Cafeteria remains too small for its student population,
- Maintains student congestion in front hallway of the building,
- Math and Social Studies programs although being renovated will not meet Ed Spec even though HCPSS promised that any program/area touched would comply with Ed Spec,
- Erroneously classifies the Auditorium and Wrestling as available classrooms,
- When finished, new Technology Resource Classrooms will not function as intended because rooms will need to be converted into general classroom space to make up for the 9 classrooms lost.

In addition, the latest plan is also likely to be the most disruptive to school operations during the multi-year construction. It requires 18 portables (14 plus the 4 existing) to be spread around the campus— circling the tennis courts, behind the school and on the west side practice fields. Mt. Hebron's administration, when asked by the Planning Committee, was unable to determine the impact this would have on instructional time since transition time between classes would need to be lengthened. The Planning Committee questioned whether temporary, modular facilities could be used instead. While at first HCPSS expressed concern about the cost, HCPSS stated they believe modular facilities will work. However, it is unknown whether an 18-room modular will fit; questions about about cost, location, and logistics.

A change in price but no change in HCPSS funds requested

\$54 million is HCPSS' cost estimates for its plan. However, HCPSS will not advise the Board of Education (BOE) to request funds beyond their self-imposed cap of \$50 million; even though more is necessary to fully implement HCPSS' design. Instead, HCPSS is hoping that bids will come in under their self-imposed cap of \$50 million. If not, components of HCPSS' plan will be significantly altered or eliminated to absorb the \$4 million difference. The plans and space analysis are to be posted on our website at www.mhhsptsa.com/8.html.

Teachers' response to 1/22/08 design plan

The teacher representatives on the planning committee oppose the 1/22 plan and sent a letter to the BOE on 2/7/08. Detailing the teachers' problems with the proposed plan, the full letter is available at our website at www.mhhsptsa.com/8.html.

HMH expresses concerns and seeks continued dialogue to develop viable plan

Ken Roey told the Mt. Hebron Planning Committee that HCPSS would not address their concerns with the 1/22 design concept. In fact, the Committee, he said, would not meet again. With respect to concerns, he suggested they be sent to the Board.

Hoping that the dialogue would continue, HMH met with HCPSS to discuss concerns and offer general suggestions to improve the plan. HMH representatives spoke during the 2/7/08 Board of Education meeting (public forum time) to inform the Board of general concerns and request their support for continued dialogue to improve the plan. Public Forum time had to be used because HMH and the Planning Committee were not permitted to speak as part of HCPSS' presentation to the Board. HCPSS' Ken Roey presented the 1/22 plan to the Board and asserted that plan is fine as is. HMH's suggestions were dismissed.

What is next?

- HMH will seek to meet with the Board and other public officials to educate them on our concerns and suggestions.\
- Look for more information about the 1/22 plan's specifics coming soon.
- There will be a request for emails to public officials in early March.
- Join us in support as we testify before County Executive Ken Ulman on March 6th. Email helpmthebron@yahoo.com for specifics if you can attend.

Summary

As this plan current stands, Mt. Hebron loses too much. Remember this plan will cause an immense disruption to our children's education for a 3 to 4 year period at likely cost of \$54 million dollars, when only \$50 million is being sought. This is an unwise investment of our tax dollars.

This must be done right the first time; our children's education and our limited tax dollars require it. We may need to wait a bit longer. It is better to know that the right plan is slightly delayed than rush into the wrong plan being built right now.

Your continued concern and support are greatly appreciated and very much needed. Thank you. Feel free to forward.

Sign up for emails on helpmthebron@yahoo.com. Want to send your opinion to the Board of Education now? Email them at boe@hcpss.org. We are also in need of letters to the editor. Interested? hcletters@patuxent.com For the Howard County Times or for the Baltimore Sun email stan.rappaport@baltsun.com

If you would like to be removed from this mailing list, please respond to this email with REMOVE in the subject line.