

## **A Message from the Superintendent**

Over the past several months, we have received multiple contacts, including email and telephone messages, regarding the possibility of a third high school located on the property of Saddle Ridge Elementary & Middle School. The Board members and I have attempted to answer each of these messages to assure transparency and to get the proper information communicated to those expressing interest and concern. I am sure there are others asking some of these same questions, so I will attempt to provide the information for you in this correspondence that will be posted on our District website and our social media outlets.

The master plan developed for this property does include a potential third high school and athletic fields in the future.

- The current E-SPLOST (2017-2022) has Saddle Ridge High School listed in the referendum. This allows it to be a potential project but currently does not include funds set aside or reserved.
- Enrollment numbers are monitored at every school throughout the District; we continue to look closely at both our existing high schools to determine if space needs become apparent or currently exist.
- We maintain and update a 5-Year Facility Plan with the Georgia Department of Education. The potential of a Saddle Ridge High School is listed in our current plan. This plan generates entitlement funds from the State for capital projects based on current enrollment and the need for additional Instructional Units (IU's). Entitlement funds are then combined with local funds (E-SPLOST) to fund a project. Our current plan is showing a surplus of IU's at the high school level.
- If the need for additional IU's is determined in the future, the Board has several options which potentially include:
  - Introduction of portable classrooms on the existing campuses to accommodate growth.
  - Consideration of rezoning to equalize the number of students at each of the existing high schools.
  - Consider the option of a Career Academy serving both existing high schools and lowering their student counts.
  - Consider building a third high school
- Other items to consider include but are not limited to:
  - Construction costs are estimated to be approximately \$30-40 million for a third high school. This does not include the operational costs and the costs associated with teacher and staff requirements.
  - Construction timeframe for a high school-between 20-24 months (from determination of need to ribbon cutting)
  - Current construction on campus includes baseball and softball fields, restrooms, concessions, and parking.

I hope this information expresses the true reality of a decision to begin construction of a third high school here in our District. Please understand and be reminded; the members of the Board of Education and I are committed to this project in the future based on some of the items I have detailed for you. Please contact me if you have additional questions or concerns.