
Community Engagement Meeting Feedback & FAQ



The New Elementary School at Dresden

Schools Represented

What is your relationship to Dresden Elementary?

[More Details](#)

- Current Parent / Caregiver 4
- Future Parent / Caregiver 0
- Immediate Community Member... 2
- DeKalb County Resident (Live M... 4
- Other 4



It should come as no surprise that the majority of responders lived near the school, with the majority of them being parents or caregivers.

Also present were a large turnout of DeKalb County residents, both near and far, in addition to curious and concerned citizen unaffiliated with DeKalb County.

Design

What do you want to see most **honored** in the design?

[More Details](#)

- History - The proud past legacy ... 2
- Future - Embracing new and exc... 2
- Diversity - Highlighting the diffe... 5
- Environment - An eco-focused a... 2



History, the future, and the environment all tied in feedback on what should be honored in the design, but diversity stood out to most as the key element to incorporate into the design language of the school.

Unity at Dresden

What do you think most **unites** the school?

[More Details](#)

- Aspiration & Ambition - The col... 1
- Culture & Community - Shared ... 6
- Heritage & History - A proud le... 0
- Learning & Leadership - Teacher... 5



It's heartening to see that the majority of respondents recognize the vital role of both the community and teachers in fostering unity within Dresden. Indeed, these two pillars form the foundation of a supportive and nurturing learning environment, where collaboration, trust, and mutual respect flourish. Together, community members and dedicated educators work hand in hand to create a vibrant and inclusive school community that empowers students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

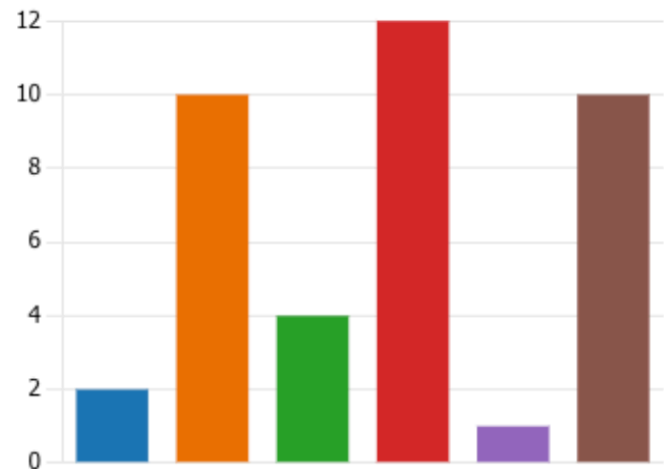


Greatness at Dresden

What do you think is most important to make the school **great**? Choose 3.

[More Details](#)

Technology	2
Safety	10
Extracurriculars (Sports, Art, Mu...)	4
Teachers & Staff	12
School Design	1
Parental Involvement	10



The survey results are clear: the majority of respondents have emphasized the pivotal role of teachers in shaping the school's success. Their dedication, expertise, and commitment to student growth are viewed as the cornerstone of a thriving learning environment. Alongside the recognition of teachers' impact, there's a notable emphasis on the importance of parental involvement in their child's education, demonstrating a shared belief in the power of collaboration between home and school.

Additionally, safety emerged as a close second, underscoring the significance of providing a secure and nurturing environment where students can thrive academically and emotionally. These findings highlight a collective commitment to prioritizing the well-being and educational success of the students at Dresden Elementary School.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

During and after the meeting we asked you to submit any and all constructive questions, comments, and concerns. We have taken that feedback and have addressed those most frequently asked. If you do not see your concern addressed, please feel free to email us at dcsdbuilds@dekalbschoolsga.org.

How is construction going to be managed with kids in school on site without disturbing their learning environment? What went into the decision to keep students on site during construction?

The management of construction while students are on-site is a top priority for us, and extensive planning has gone into ensuring minimal disruption to the learning environment. The construction will be carried out in carefully planned phases, strategically scheduled to minimize interference with daily school activities. This phased approach allows us to prioritize the safety and well-being of students while still progressing with necessary upgrades. We've successfully implemented similar strategies in past projects, demonstrating our commitment to maintaining a conducive learning environment amidst construction activities.

The decision to keep students on campus during construction was carefully considered and based on logistical factors aimed at prioritizing the needs of our community. In an area where not everyone has easy access to transportation, keeping students closer to their homes ensures continued access to educational resources and support systems. By making this decision, we aim to minimize disruptions to students' daily routines and provide them with stability and familiarity during this transitional period. We remain dedicated to ensuring that construction activities are managed effectively, with the utmost consideration for the safety and comfort of our students and staff.

There are major concerns about safety, both during construction and after. Not only for the students, but for the community as well. What steps are being taken to make this a priority?

Ensuring the safety and security of both students within the school and our neighbors in the immediate area is of utmost importance to us. Our comprehensive safety plan encompasses various measures, including controlled access points, surveillance systems, and on-site security personnel. We are collaborating closely with local law enforcement to establish effective emergency response protocols and community outreach initiatives. Lighting and landscaping designs are being strategically implemented to enhance visibility and discourage unauthorized access. We are also committed to fostering open communication with neighbors to address any specific concerns and to maintain a safe and secure environment that benefits the entire community. Regular safety drills and community engagement sessions will further contribute to a collaborative and vigilant approach to security. The well-being and safety of students in the classroom and DeKalb citizens in the communities surrounding our schools are of high importance, and we welcome ongoing feedback to continually improve our safety measures.

Traffic is a big issue around Dresden. How will it be handled during construction to minimize the impact on an already busy road? Will there be changes made to the site to improve traffic flow?

Addressing these issues is a top priority for our planning team. We are currently conducting thorough traffic impact assessments to ensure minimal disruption to the surrounding areas. The traffic flow, parking arrangements, and coordination of start and end times for the new elementary school at Dresden are critical considerations in our planning process. As we progress, community input will play a vital role in refining these plans. Rest assured, we are committed to developing comprehensive and sustainable strategies that prioritize the convenience of residents while ensuring the successful integration of the new school into the community. We will present any and all recommendations from the traffic study for offsite improvement to the city of Chamblee and DeKalb County.

A new school that will likely last 50+ years shouldn't be designed narrowly for its current population. Neighborhoods change, districts change (redistricting), curriculum and technology change. How are you ensuring that this design is going to be functional and welcoming today and flexible for the next 50 years?

The construction of the new elementary school at Dresden is being meticulously planned to align with projected future student populations. Our design incorporates flexibility to adapt to changing educational needs and any potential shifts in the population. While redistricting is a consideration to optimize resources and balance student enrollments, any such decisions would be made in consultation with the community and with the utmost transparency. Our goal is to create learning environments that not only meet the current needs of students but are adaptable to accommodate any potential future changes in student demographics or population dynamics.

How did the DeKalb County School District arrive at 900 seats for the capacity of the school?

The DeKalb County School District has established a standard capacity of 900 seats for new elementary schools based on extensive research and planning. This capacity is designed to efficiently accommodate our current and projected student population, ensuring that we can provide high-quality educational experiences and resources for all students. Unless there is a compelling reason for additional capacity—such as significant anticipated population growth in a specific area or unique community needs—we adhere to this standard to maintain consistency across the district. This approach helps us to effectively manage resources, provide equitable educational opportunities, and ensure that each school can support a comprehensive range of programs and services. We continuously monitor enrollment trends and community feedback to make informed decisions about school capacities and to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students and families.

Will the school add more sensory items for students that have autism and add more teachers who are trained to educate students with autism?

DeKalb County School District understands the importance of providing diverse educational opportunities for all students. Our commitment to academic excellence is inclusive, and we are actively exploring the implementation of programs that benefit diverse learning styles to offer enriched curriculum options. Additionally, we are actively hiring Special Education teachers for the DeKalb County School District. Our goal is to ensure that students from all walks of life have access to high-quality education and the resources needed to pursue their academic and professional ambitions. We look forward to engaging with the community to tailor our academic offerings to meet the specific needs and aspirations of the students in this neighborhood.

How can I stay up to date on the projected timeline any significant design or timeline changes?

Your concern about and proactive approach to staying informed on the projected timeline and any significant design or timeline changes is acknowledged and appreciated. To ensure you remain up to date, there are several avenues available. Firstly, attending future planned community engagement sessions will provide firsthand updates and the opportunity to voice your concerns directly to project officials. Additionally, the Capital Improvement Program website (<https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/cip/>) serves as a valuable resource, offering detailed timelines and progress reports on design developments. For more immediate inquiries or clarifications, reaching out via email to dcsdbuilds@dekalbschoolsga.org is recommended. This dedicated email address is specifically designated to address questions and concerns related to the Capital Improvement Program. By utilizing these channels, you can stay well informed and engaged throughout the process.

What is the budget for this project? The Monthly Financial Report says it is ZERO, even though the contract is signed. Where are the numbers?

The current estimates for the total construction cost of this project are \$76 million. The budget for this project is based on the approved commitments, such as contracts, and therefore only increases once these commitments are formally approved. Regarding the Monthly Financial Report showing zero, this reflects the status prior to the approval of any major commitments. Once the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) contract with the construction manager is approved, the budget for this project will be updated to \$72,323,774, which matches the approved GMP contract value. It's important to note that the GMP only covers the construction aspect of the project. It does not include costs for furniture, technology devices, and other non-built-in equipment, which is why the total estimated cost of the project is higher than the GMP. Rest assured, all financial details will be transparently updated as commitments are approved and the project progresses.

How are the community, parents, and other stakeholder being engaged, acknowledging that there are significant language barriers for most families of the school?

Thank you for raising a crucial point regarding community engagement, especially considering the language barriers faced by many families in our school community. We are committed to ensuring that all stakeholders, including parents and community members, are actively involved in the decision-making process. To address language barriers, we are implementing various strategies. Firstly, we will utilize translators and interpreters during community engagement sessions to ensure that information is accessible to everyone, particularly our primarily Spanish-speaking population. Additionally, we are tapping into community representatives and leveraging existing neighborhood meetings to reach individuals where they are most comfortable. By taking these proactive steps, we aim to foster inclusive dialogue and ensure that all voices are heard and valued throughout the planning and implementation stages of the Capital Improvement Program. Your feedback is invaluable as we strive to create a more inclusive and responsive school community.
