

Abington Senior High breaks ground on massive \$100M renovation, addition

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Dan Wing/KYW Newsradio

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ABINGTON, Pa. (KYW Newsradio) – School District officials broke ground on an addition and renovation project at Abington Senior High School Friday that will cost more than \$104 million.

Officials say the construction of the new 'Stephen A. Schwarzman Center for Science and Technology' will at least be a two-year project. Following that, it could another two years before the renovations to the nearly 63-year-old school are complete.

Tenth grader, Ethan Weilheimer, says the buzz is growing amongst students about the new addition.

"I think a lot of kids are real excited to have a bigger technology department, and a lot more technologically advanced sections of the school," Ethan said.

School Board President Raymond McGarry told KYW Newsradio what the new building will include.

"New science labs, new art rooms, new computer labs and other expanded classrooms, and it's going to bring us further along in the technology, enhance our technology for educating our students," said McGarry.



Rendering provided by Abington Senior High School

The renovations to the existing building will upgrade just about everything from HVAC to classroom design. It will also add air conditioning, and allow the district to move its 9th grade students from the middle schools to the high school.

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Ground Broke for Abington Senior High School

- October 31st, 2018

Abington, Pa. – The Board of School Directors of the Abington School District announced the groundbreaking for its more-than-\$104-million Abington Senior High School additions and renovations project, including the Stephen A. Schwarzman Center for Science and Technology.

With an anticipated opening in the fall of 2020, the new science and technology center includes science, art and general classroom space. Other additions throughout the school building involve the construction of an auxiliary gymnasium, career center and a new cafeteria. Ninety-three percent of the existing facility will also be renovated, with an estimated completion date of 2022.



“After years of planning and design, the Board of School Directors and I were very much looking forward to breaking ground on what will be the biggest project the District has embarked on in the 21st century,” Board President Raymond McGarry, Esquire, says. “With Abington School District seeing an enrollment growth of more than 10 percent in the past decade—by approximately more than 100 students each year—it became evident that we needed to find a practical and economical solution for our community. We are pleased to be able to bring this project to fruition, which will benefit every student for generations to come.”

This will be the first major addition and renovation to the original 1956 Abington Senior High School building in nearly two decades. Currently, Abington Senior High houses grades 10-12, but the expansion is designed to allow for the accommodation of grade 9, which presently is housed at Abington Junior High School, located on the same campus. As a result, 6th-graders will be moved from their respective seven elementary schools to the Junior High building, which upon completion of the project, will be home to grades 6-8 in a middle school configuration.

These planned reconfigured grade spans have helped pave the way for a reimagined curriculum, for which a Superintendent's Committee has been formed in order to help shape new, innovative programming focused on the skills needed to compete in the evolving workforce and prepare students for the nation's fastest-growing industries and jobs of the future. The Committee is comprised of administrators, teachers, students and community members to inform best practices for implementing these changes.

Additionally, the new curriculum will provide high school students more flexibility to choose classes across a range of subjects and specialties, providing greater exposure to a variety of industries and career fields. Complementing these changes, Abington Senior High School will also expand school counseling services so that children have the opportunity to explore their career interests earlier in life, with the goal of looking beyond just degree attainment.

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Abington School District starting \$104 million renovation-addition at high school

The Intelligencer

By [Chris English](#)

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The project includes the Stephen A. Schwarzman Center for Science and Technology being funded with \$25 million donated by the Blackstone CEO and Abington High School graduate.

Contractors hired by the Abington School District are gearing up for a \$104 million renovation-addition at the senior high school that will include the [Stephen A. Schwarzman Center for Science and Technology](#) being funded with \$25 million donated by the Blackstone CEO and Abington High School graduate.

A groundbreaking ceremony for the project was to be held Friday afternoon. In addition to the science and technology center, work will include an auxiliary gymnasium, career center, new cafeteria and other amenities. The Schwarzman facility is expected to open in the fall of 2020 and the remainder of the work in 2022, a district media release said.

The work will be the first major addition and renovation at the high school in nearly two decades. The building was originally constructed in 1956.

The expansion will allow for the ninth grade to join grades 10-12 at the high school. When the project is completed, sixth-graders will then join grades 7-8 at the junior high school.

School district enrollment has increased 10 percent in the last decade and an updated high school was needed, school board President Raymond McGarry said.

“After years of planning and design, the board of school directors and I are very much looking forward to breaking ground on what will be the biggest project the district has

embarked on in the 21st century,” he said. “We are pleased to be able to bring this project to fruition, which will benefit every student for generations to come.”

The project and resulting grade reconfigurations within buildings will also bring a “reimagined curriculum” to help shape “new, innovative programming focused on the skills needed to compete in the evolving workforce and prepare students for the nation’s fastest-growing industries and jobs of the future,” the media release said. A superintendent’s committee has been formed to shape the new curriculum.

“The new curriculum will provide high school students more flexibility to choose classes across a range of subjects and specialties, providing greater exposure to a variety of industries and career fields,” the release added. “Complementing these changes, Abington Senior High School will also expand school counseling services so that children have the opportunity to explore their career interests earlier in life, with the goal of looking beyond just degree attainment.”

The part of the project not covered with the Schwarzman gift will be funded with a bond issue, district officials said.
