

Return to Story Print This Page  Larger text  Smaller text

# Shaler Area School Board votes to rebuild Rogers Primary School



By [Rachel Farkas](#)

Thursday, Aug. 20, 2015, 2:36 p.m.

Updated 21 hours ago



Shaler Area School District's Rogers Primary School officially will be getting a new building, planned to be more than twice as large as the current one.

The Shaler Area School Board voted 7-2 to authorize HHSDR Architects/Engineers to complete a schematic design of demolition and new construction of Rogers Primary School at its Aug. 19 meeting. School directors Jeanne Petrovich and Tim Gapsky voted against the motion. The school was damaged by a fire in April.

Construction is slated to begin late spring or early summer of 2016, said Charles Bennett, district director of business affairs.

The project will be financed through two bond issues, a bank-qualified bond slightly under \$10 million in September or October and another in the spring once bids come in and a final price is determined, Bennett said.

The new two-story 75,000-square-foot building will cost around \$23.2 million, said HHSDR Architect/Engineers president Greer Hayden. The structure would be set back from Scott Avenue, will double the parking spaces and allow for better security.

The trade-off is it will eliminate at least one of the baseball fields from behind the existing Rogers.

There will be 24 classrooms in the new K-3 building, six per grade, a cafeteria and a separate multipurpose room.

The existing Rogers Primary is a one-story building with about 34,000 square feet and 75 parking spaces, Hayden said.

He said the benefits of having a new building over remodeling include consistent class sizes; grades grouped together; the cafeteria and separate multipurpose room; and more space in the art, music, library and offices.

Other advantages, he said, are space above the ceiling for heating, ventilation and air conditioning; more parking; better site circulation; and better security.

At the Aug. 12 meeting when Hayden presented options for remodeling the building or constructing a new school, some school board members raised concerns about the balance of parking spaces to outdoor play area in the new building. However, Rogers Principal Cynthia Foht said parking needs to be a priority.

Board members decided eventually to move forward with the option to build new over a remodeling after Greer said they needed to make a decision within a week in order to get the project on track for a spring 2016 start.

HHSDR submitted a PlanCon application on Shaler Area's behalf to the Pennsylvania Department of Education in June to receive reimbursement for the construction project.

The board also voted Aug. 19 to approve Grogan, Graffam PC as bond counsel for the Rogers Primary project and McIlvried, DiDiano and Mox LLC to survey the Rogers site as recommended by HHSDR.

Bennett said a construction manager will be hired late fall to be the "eyes and ears of the district" as the project progresses. Blueprints will be completed in December or January 2016, and bids will be sought and contracts awarded in the spring.

Through the 2015-16 school year and during construction, Rogers Primary students will remain at Burchfield Primary. Once the new, larger school is complete, Bennett said, attendance boundaries likely will be changed.

Rachel Farkas is a staff writer for Trib Total Media. She can be reached at [rfarkas@tribweb.com](mailto:rfarkas@tribweb.com).