

# School board OK's \$1.7 million for high school renovation

## Project is first of several phases

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By [Michael Davis](#) (789)  
[mdavis@myjpa.com](mailto:mdavis@myjpa.com)

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The Butts County Board of Education will spend up to \$1.71 million on the first phase of renovations to Jackson High School.

The work, which will be done over the summer, includes new flooring in portions of the school, reconfiguring the vehicle entrance and adding parking, and beginning to prepare the site where an expansion wing will be built.

School board members met Thursday in a special called meeting to approve a so-called "guaranteed maximum price" for the work, which will be done by a number of contractors managed by the school system's construction consultant, Parrish Construction Group.

The work will be paid for with money from the school system's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, which voters approved in March 2012 to fund a number of school system projects. The first phase of renovations to Jackson High is one of three planned phases of work with a possible fourth if funding holds up.

Butts County Schools Superintendent Robert "Buddy" Costley on Thursday said that because the approved amount of \$1.71 million for the Phase 1 projects is a maximum, it's possible the system will spend less on the projects. The total includes a more-than \$85,000 contingency budget to cover unexpected expenses.

The total also includes \$80,000 in projects not originally included in the Phase 1 plans, like painting at Daughtry Elementary School, cutting in a doorway at Jackson High to link two classrooms, a similar project at Henderson Middle School and installing audio-video equipment in the commons area at Jackson High. School officials said that those projects had only recently been planned and that while contracting crews are working locally, it would be cost effective to add them to the bids.

Parrish Construction in November told school board members they expected Phase 1 to cost about \$1.77 million, \$60,000 more than the price approved Thursday and without the added projects.

Perhaps the most noticeable interior changes next fall will be in the high school's commons area. School officials say the area's floor will be replaced with porcelain tile and that audio and

video equipment will be installed along with acoustical panels to make the area more suitable for presentations and other functions.

Other Phase 1 projects include polished concrete flooring through a number of hallways along with a fresh coat of paint on the walls in hallways. Carpet tiles will also be installed in a number of classrooms, but Butts County Schools Executive Director of Operations Shannon Christian said floors won't be changed and walls won't be painted in areas where work planned as part of later phases could damage them.

Crews will also be fixing or replacing broken electronic marquee signs at Stark and Jackson elementary schools and installing signs at Daughtry Elementary and Jackson High.

Costley, the superintendent, said he expects the work at the high school this summer and in the future will have a spillover economic benefit to Jackson and Butts County as some of the work would be awarded to local contractors and contractors who may come from outside the county will be spending money here on fuel, meals and possibly materials.

Costley added that the renovation projects will improve and upgrade existing facilities for longterm continued use.

"When that new wing is built, they're going to see a brand new high school without having to pay for a brand new high school," Costley said.