

Clover Hill replacement school costs skyrocket



Page Dowdy/Chesterfield Observer

Even though the replacement high school for Clover Hill will have the same floor plan as the new Cosby High School (above), it's expected to cost 75 percent more to build.

By Greg Pearson

STAFF WRITER

The replacement high school for Clover Hill, scheduled to open in the fall of 2010, will cost about 75 percent more than Cosby High School, which opened this fall. Cosby cost \$45.5 million for construction as compared to an estimated \$80 million just four years later for Clover Hill.

The replacement school will be built on 81 acres in the southeast quadrant of Genito Road and Route 288 using the same floor plan as Cosby. The building will have 202,877 square feet on two floors and 970 parking spaces for vehicles and school buses. The plan was submitted to the planning department last

week for review before it goes to the planning commission and then the Board of Supervisors for final approval.

The school will have the same number of athletic fields as Cosby, but its layout will be complicated by six wetlands on the property. "It'll be a challenge," said Bill Bridgforth, director of construction for Chesterfield schools. The contract should be let this summer, and Bridgforth is hoping for 5-6 bids.

The Cosby contract was let in 2003 using a public process called the Public-Private Education Act (PPEA), which allows private companies to bid on building schools. This contract will use Chesterfield's conventional

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It looks so easy

I still remember putting together a few greens for an advent wreath for the dining room table. Someone looked at it (no, I am not going to say who except that my other half was at work) and said, "Sarah is a professional. Have you talked to her about this?"

There was nowhere to go but up after that. Did you know there are little plastic candle holders that reliably hold the candles upright? An oasis doesn't work when the arrangement is being moved around a lot. Red candles against a white tablecloth have great impact, and I also learned how to get candle wax out of a tablecloth. But, the red stain that never came out had so much impact, I downgraded the tablecloth to a painting drop cloth.

I started arranging flowers and weeds a few years ago and discovered it's not nearly as easy as it looks. Some weeds wilt just as soon as they are cut and never recover. Others wait until right before we sit down for dinner with our company. I'm an optimist though. I can learn by trial and error. But my trials produced errors so I signed up for a flower arranging class taught by an expert.

The day before the Tuesday class, I went on a hunt for the right mix of flowers. Apparently

flower deliveries are made in the middle or late in the week. So the flowers were already a week old. "Never on a Monday" took on new meaning.

I learned that some have a gift for making daisies bend to their will and others break the flowers off the stems. So when I signed up for the flower arranging class held a few weeks ago, I had a talk with the woman who runs the floral department. "I want strong flowers."

"Here are some red roses. Look at the bold color."

"No. I mean strong flowers. The kind that don't break easily."

She gave me a funny look and handed me a pot of orchids - silk.

Three weeks ago I took a flower arranging class taught by an expert. She said she started out just like we were - in a class, but I know she must have been turning her sippy cups into vases by age three. I followed the directions as she was putting her arrangement together and stood back.

It was clear to me that her directions left something to be desired until I looked at the arrangements around me. Did they hear the same directions I did? My greens clearly listed to the left and seemed a bit bushy for the small container. I pulled them out, cut out all of the side branches and stuck them back in the oasis. Better, I thought.

When the instructor came by, she said, "Let me show you a trick," and she snipped a little here and moved a few stems. So what's the trick? I missed that part entirely. Maybe it's talent.



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