

# How Will the New Elementary School Affect You?

Previously named the Growth Task Force, the **School Community Advocacy Coalition (SCAC)** is comprised of members of the Highland Creek Elementary School Leadership Team and PTA, as well as, parents of HCES students and Highland Creek Homeowners' Association Board Members. Created by concerned parents after the last Ridge Road Middle School boundary meeting, the purpose of the SCAC is to facilitate communication with CMS staff on issues that affect the children in our community.

The 2007 CMS Bond Referendum included money to build a new elementary school on Johnston-Oehler Road. On **April 13<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6:30-8:30pm**, CMS will hold community meetings at Highland Creek Elementary School (HCES) to discuss boundary options. Even though the County Commissioners have put the issuance of the bonds to build the new school on hold, CMS Planning is committed to moving forward with the boundary discussions unless otherwise directed.

At the boundary meetings, CMS will present **three discussion options**, which can be found online at <http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/cmsdepartments/StudentPlacement/PlanningServices/Pages/Planning.aspx>. (A link to these options is on the PTA's website - **www.HCEPTA.org**.) In addition to HCES, the Johnston-Oehler Elementary School (JOES) boundaries include students attending Mallard Creek Elementary School (MCES) and David Cox Elementary School. CMS has a responsibility to ensure fairness by listening to the entire community impacted by the boundary changes; therefore, it will present options it believes balances the needs of all three schools.

Based on feedback received from parents, residents, etc., the SCAC deemed the CMS boundary discussion options undesirable due to their inherently divisive nature to the school and community. As a result, the **SCAC proposes the following three options** as alternatives:

- **JOES Magnet/Highland Creek Community Plan** - In this option the boundaries for HCES are drawn as tightly as reasonable to allow all of the HC Community to remain at HCES. HCES would be at approximately 102% capacity based on current enrollment and not allowing for future growth. JOES reduced enrollment would allow CMS the option of attracting students via a Magnet program and accommodating potential growth surrounding the future I-485 corridor.
- **HCES/MCES Expansion** - In this option JOES is not built and the capital funding is used to expand HCES and MCES for the partial cost of a new school. The advantage to this plan is that it saves money. The disadvantage is that in the future this area might need the school.
- **K-2/3-5 Split** - In this option the HCES/JOES attendance zones would be merged. K-2 students would attend JOES while 3-5 students would attend HCES. The advantage of this plan is that it keeps the community together. The disadvantage of this plan is that siblings could attend multiple schools.

These options are in alignment with parents', residents', and taxpayers' desires; as well as, CMS goals and objectives. While they **all keep Highland Creek residents at HCES, the JOES Magnet/Highland Creek Community Plan surfaced as the prevailing recommended option.**

# How Will the New Elementary School Affect You?

We realize this is a difficult situation and no solution will please everyone. While the SCAC does not discourage anyone from contacting CMS directly, we do urge everyone who does to **keep feedback fact-based, constructive, productive and positive**. Much effort has gone into establishing an amicable relationship with CMS. This foundation provides the best opportunity to influence not only CMS Planning to make the most desirable recommendation but the Board of Education who must approve it. It is important that we remember to represent the character and integrity of this great community. Anything short of that would be detrimental to positively influence the outcome.

If you have a question, comment, suggestion or would like to be added to our email list please contact us at [SCAC@carolina.rr.com](mailto:SCAC@carolina.rr.com). For more information please see the JOES link on [www.HCEPTA.org](http://www.HCEPTA.org).