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# Construction delays affect school students

By Lisa O'donnell

Long periods of rain in the winter and spring have pushed back the construction schedule of two major projects for Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools.

As a result, the new Career Center and **Walkertown Middle/High School will not be ready for students when school resumes Aug. 25.**

For the first few months of the coming school year, the 230 freshmen and sophomores who make up the new Walkertown High School will go to school at Atkins High School until the new school is completed, probably in early November. The middle school students will remain in their old school then move into the new building a few weeks after the high school students, said Piper Hendrix, the principal of the middle/high school.

The current middle school and the new middle/high school are near each other off Main Street in Walkertown.

Housing the students in portable classrooms on the Walkertown campus was deemed too expensive. Other alternatives, such as housing the students in the old middle school or in a local space, were also considered but discounted because of infrastructure and technology challenges.

Atkins, which is about 10 minutes from the Walkertown campus, has the space to accommodate a temporary influx of students as it transitions into a magnet high school, said Theo Helm, a spokesman for the school system.

Walkertown students will have their own entrance, gymnasium, lunch period and drop-off site, said Hendrix, who will split her time between the middle and high schools.

"Yes, there are challenges, but we are addressing them as they come up as quickly as they can," she said. "Our goal is to make it as smooth and comfortable for the parents and students as we can."

The athletic fields at Walkertown will be ready at the start of the school, allowing athletes in fall sports to play on their own campus.

The new Career Center, which is on Highland Avenue on the campus of Kennedy Middle School, will also be ready a few months after the start of the school year. In the meantime, students will continue to take classes at the Miller Street campus.

Forsyth Technical Community College will take over that complex once the move is complete.

The school system's other major construction project, Morgan Elementary School in Clemmons, is on track to open as scheduled for the 2011-12 school year, Helm said.

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