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NEWS

FLASH

A REPORT ON THE CROWDED CONDITIONS
AND THE NEW HIGH SCHOOL
BY KATHY BATTEN AND ANN JONES

As students and teachers here know, conditions in Smithfield High School are far from ideal for teaching and learning. Many classrooms are overcrowded, and some are totally unfit for classes. Laboratory space is very limited as is the space allotted for commercial and industrial arts. Cafeteria facilities also are in need of expansion, and there is a marked need for recreational space.

Evidently, we, the students of SHS are not alone in feeling that improvements are necessary. Plans are underway for a new high school. Having heard little about these plans, and feeling certain that present SHS students and teachers would be interested in knowing about the project, we asked County School Superintendent E. S. Simpson to tell us something about it.

Mr. Simpson says that the new high school will be a consolidation of Smithfield, Selma, and Wilsons' Mills High Schools. In order for a high school to offer a high standard of learning to its students, he explained, it should serve 1,000 or more students, which the new high school will do. A panel of experts recommended consolidation and construction of a high school in the Smithfield area in 1960. Shortly afterwards, 30 acres of land was purchased for this purpose, this land lying between Buffalo Road and Highway 301 east of Smithfield. According to Mr. Simpson, construction costs will be approximately one and one-half million dollars. A study committee is devoting constant attention to this project, and an architect has been employed. The expected completion date for the high school is 1968. The present high school in Smithfield would become a junior high school taking in grades seven through nine.

Mr. Simpson pointed out many reasons for building an enlarged high school and cited the many advantages it will bring. The new high school will offer a more complete curriculum, including a wider range of college preparatory courses, vocational training, and commercial and industrial courses. Teachers will be attracted to the larger high school since there will be a better chance for them to specialize in the field of their choice. Representatives of industry (especially Sylvania which is locating a new plant here) have expressed a strong interest in the new high school program. They feel as most Johnston County natives do, that the overall progress of a community depends on the educational progress of the community.

In conclusion Mr. Simpson asserted, "The present high school has served well, but it is no longer adequate as a senior high school. With some alteration and adjustments however, it will serve quite satisfactorily as a junior high school."