Walhalla High construction 'on time and under budget'

Savings estimated in six figures

BY GREG OLIVER
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — School District of Oconee County superintendent Michael Thorsland recently received a call from Trehel Corporation's construction project manager, who asked to meet regarding the construction budget for the new Walhalla High School.

Thorsland said the news he received at the meeting was better than he could have dreamed.

"Jack Webber, of Trehel, told us Trehel has value-engineered some things and taken some steps of their own to save us some money," Thorsland told school board members during Monday night's meeting. "He said they are still on time and under budget."

The savings that would bring the district under the $55 million guaranteed maximum price for the project, according to the superintendent, are not small. In fact, Thorsland said Webber told him that it appears to be in the six-figure range.

The new school will be located on the west side of S.C. Highway 11, a mile north of the S.C. Highway 183 intersection and a little more than three miles from the existing high school site on Razorback Lane. Officials say the new facility will house around 1,300 students with room for growth.

Total square footage for the new school, including mezzanine space, is 268,000. The new

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school will feature approximately 60 classrooms overall, with some 750 tons of steel and a half million pieces of block used.

During a spring tour of the facility, Thorsland said there were currently 130-140 workers on the site, and the number could increase to 200-250 by the time the project ends next summer. The roof has already been placed on the facility.

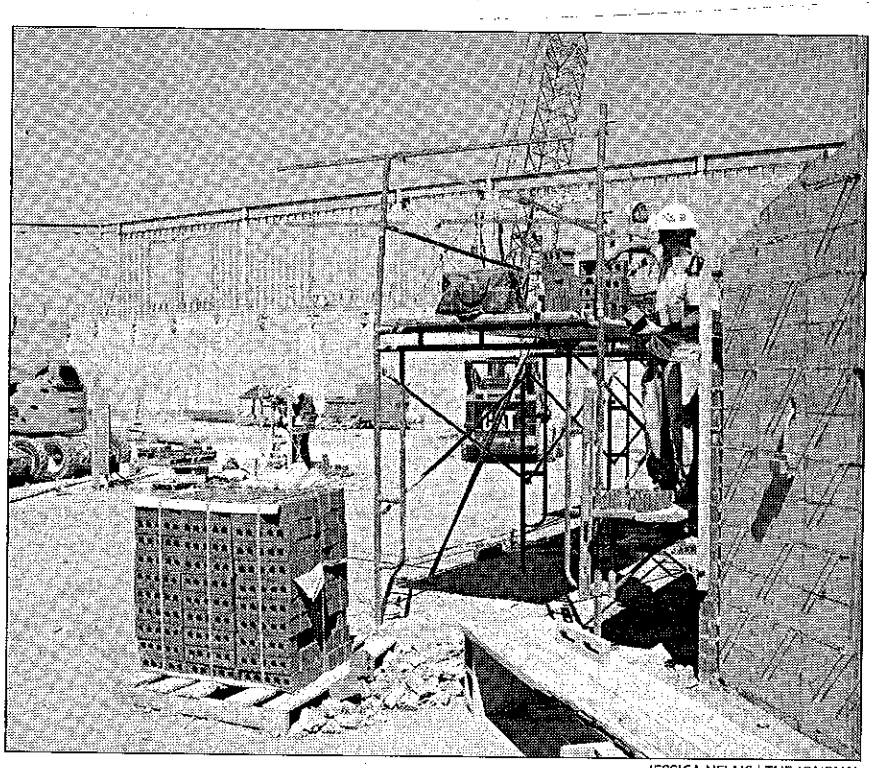
Also featured on the new campus will be a gymnasium, with a main floor of 94 feet, a second, smaller gym, a cafeteria located in the front and a lobby area. The second floor will feature 12 science rooms and nine science labs, with six of the rooms sharing three labs and six having their own lab. There will be a walkway on the second floor as well.

A courtyard, a media center sitting directly on top of the administrative offices and facilities for sports — including football and soccer — will be located on the athletic fields outside.

"They're still doing a good job for us and hoping to turn it over to us in February, March or April," Thorsland told the board. "If we can get in by April, we'll be in great shape."

Thorsland even had a good-natured barb for new Walhalla High School principal Steve Garrett, who was sitting in the audience. Garrett will begin his first year at the new school in August and open the new school the following year.

"Mr. Garrett will have the biggest office in South Carolina — looking at the mountains on north Highway 11," Thorsland said.



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Construction on the new Walhalla High School is ahead of schedule, according to School District of Oconee County superintendent Michael Thorsland.

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