

Chesterfield panel will research school growth

BY CYNTHIA McMULLEN

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Chesterfield County is growing like a weed, and so is the need for county schools.

"Including this year, we've opened five schools in the last three years," said David S. Wyman, a member of the county School Board and co-chairman of a newly commissioned growth task force.

The task force, which will meet for the first time today, will research enrollment trends and plans for school construction, additions, renovations, costs and financing.

In the past 10 years, Wyman said, the school district has grown by about 1,000 students per year. "We're starting to catch up with the needs of the county," he said, "but we may have the need for 13 schools in the next 14 years."

To that end, the task force plans to look at alternatives to bricks and mortar, including on-line classes and proposals concerning the timing of school sessions, such as staggered schedules and double shifts, he said.

With about 58,000 students enrolled, Chesterfield County

Chesterfield school growth task force

When: today, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Where: school administration building, 9900 Krause Road

Comments: The meeting is open to the public. Questions will be answered at the meeting, as time allows, or later in writing. After the meeting, information and the opportunity for feedback will be available by visiting

www.chesterfield.k12.va.us.

Schools is the fourth-largest school division in Virginia.

"This is the first step toward looking at requirements for the next bond referendum and the county's comprehensive plan," Wyman said

The task force plans to submit its recommendations to the School Board in November.

JoLynne DeMary, former Virginia superintendent of public instruction, is co-chairwoman of the task force.

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