

Future Braswell students name Bengal as mascot, red and black as colors



By Anthony Tosie, atosie@dentonisd.org

When the first students walk through Braswell High School's doors in 2016, they'll do so as the inaugural classes to represent the school's just-decided colors of red and black as well as its newly named mascot, the Bengal.

More than 750 students – the equivalent of about half to three-fourths of Braswell's anticipated opening enrollment – cast votes in a poll from 8 a.m. Aug. 18 to noon Aug 31 to decide the school's colors and mascot. Student responses came from across the entirety of Braswell's planned U.S. Highway 380 attendance zone and ranged from fourth to 10th grade.

At the conclusion of voting, the Bengal was far and away the winning mascot choice, amassing nearly 50 percent of the vote. Students chose red and black as their favorite color choices in a hotly contested race with four other options.

"It was fantastic seeing how invested our community was in this poll, and I think we've come away with choices our students and families will be proud to represent," said Dr. Lesli Guajardo, Braswell principal. "Bengal Nation begins now, and we fight for the red and black."

Braswell is scheduled to open in August 2016 with the same full slate of academic opportunities, fine arts activities and varsity sports offered at Denton Independent School District's current three high schools – Denton, Guyer and Ryan. With 2016-17 representing a University

Interscholastic League realignment year, the Bengals will compete in varsity sports as a member of an athletic district competing for the postseason. Academic and fine arts teams will also represent the school in the full breadth of UIL competitions.

Dr. Guajardo currently remains in the process of planning and staffing her new school with the assistance of Cody Moore, Braswell's campus athletic director and head football coach.

The two will continue to take part in community events in the U.S. 380 corridor and routinely visit schools that will feed into Braswell.

Braswell High School and its athletic facilities, the Bill Carrico Athletic Complex, are currently under construction at the southeast corner of Navo Road and U.S. 380. The campus will open for the 2016-17 school year with freshmen, sophomores and juniors. Projections closer to the school's opening will determine Braswell's UIL classification and academic, athletic and fine arts districts.

Though the school will have an initial capacity of 2,400 students, a potential expansion is planned that would increase its size to accommodate more than 3,000 students.

"Cody and I are excited about making the opening of a new high school one of the bright moments for this community," Dr. Guajardo said. "I'm currently in the process of selecting the best teachers and staff members available, and given the growth of the U.S. 380 corridor, that's going to be an ongoing process for years to come."