

# KeizerCommunity

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## McNary breaks ground on changes that will transform school forever

BY MATT RAWLINGS  
Of the Keizertimes

An official groundbreaking ceremony was held at McNary High School on Friday, May 17, signaling the start of the 15-month construction period at the school — as a part of the \$619.7 million bond that Salem-Keizer voters passed last May.

More than 100 local elected officials, school board members, school staff, media members and others gathered around the front of McNary for the hour-long ceremony.

“This is a huge day for Keizer,” said Chuck Lee, who is the Board Director for Zone 6 on the Salem-Keizer Public School Board of Education. “It’s important for not only the school, but for the entire Keizer community. This investment will fund improvements to the learning environment here at McNary and will improve the economic improvement in our community.”

This is the third groundbreaking that has taken place thanks to the 2018 bond — Gubser Elementary and North Salem High School had their groundbreaking ceremonies in March.

“The Salem-Keizer School District and the community of Keizer have worked hard to make sure that this is a project that is ready to go,” Keizer mayor Cathy Clark said. “The ultimate goal is to benefit the students of our district and the students that live here in

Keizer.”

Approximately \$52.6 million will go into the project as McNary will now be able to address their overcrowding issues.

The school — which was built in 1965 and originally designed to serve 1,725 students — can now accommodate 2,200 students thanks to the planned addition of 14 new general classrooms, as well as a new science lab. There were also two new areas that will be dedicated as Career Technical Education (CTE) spaces.

“We know that there’s going to be a lot of kids that will go to college and be successful and have a lot of it paid for. But there are also students that are interested in getting immediately into the trades. And having a program like our construction program is going to train kids with real-life skills and will teach them contextualized learning,” McNary principal Erik Jespersen said.

“Our goal is that when you walk across the stage at McNary High School, you have choices and options.”

Jespersen also voiced his approval for the much-needed parking expansion and new drop-off/pick up lanes, which should greatly clear up congestion for school days and sporting events.

“If you have ever driven into McNary High School at 7 (a.m.), then you’re going to find you’re going to find your parking spot at 7:10 (a.m.),” Jespersen joked.

The expansion at McNary



wouldn’t have been possible without the district acquiring land from St. Edward Catholic Church.

Back in February, after months of contention, St. Edward agreed to sell the land adjacent to McNary to the district for \$2.26 million, which will be the new home of the Celtics softball fields and tennis courts. Both McNary soccer programs will also take advantage of the new land.

St. Edward pastor Gary Zerr was on hand for the ceremony and expressed his intent for the church to maintain their partnership with McNary.

ABOVE: Supporters of McNary High School gather in front of the school to mark the beginning of construction.

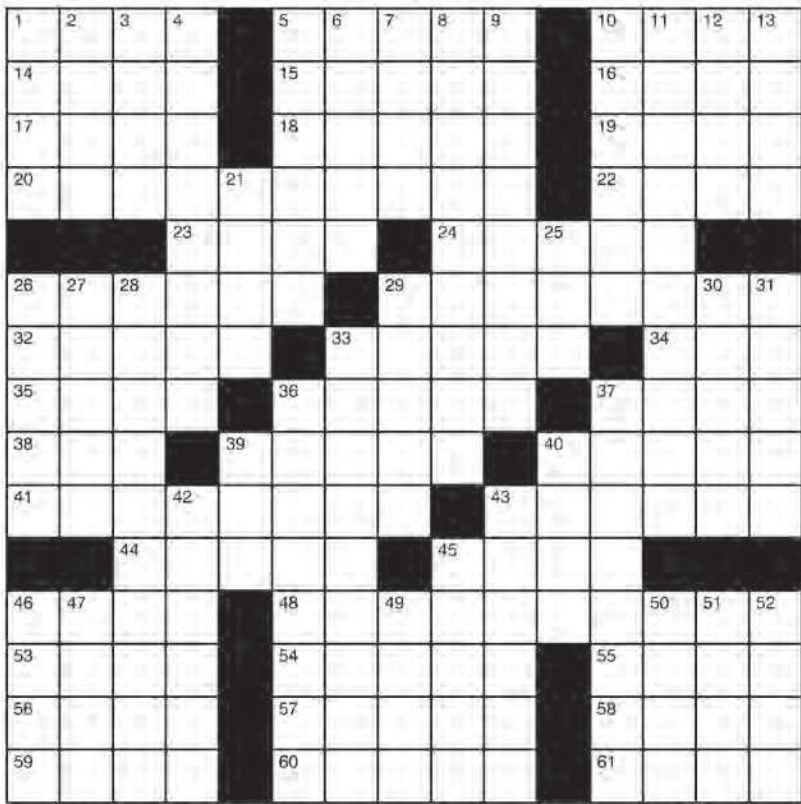
RIGHT: McNary principal Erik Jespersen (left) with McNary students Griffen Hubbard (center) and Mariah Benitez.

KEIZERTIMES/  
Matt Rawlings



### crossword

Unreal!



CREATORS NEWS SERVICE

By Charles Preston

**ACROSS**

- 1 Chances
- 5 Secrete
- 10 \_\_\_ line
- 14 Brood
- 15 Italian sauce
- 16 Fictional possum
- 17 Shells
- 18 Harsh
- 19 Nose about
- 20 Irish imp
- 22 Locale of Moab and Tooele
- 23 Some are great
- 24 Radetzky \_\_\_
- 26 Like a redhead's feet
- 29 Mean
- 32 Roman magistrate
- 33 Inscribed pillar
- 34 Baptist leader
- 35 Best
- 36 Copies
- 37 Kin of Mac
- 38 Shooter's target
- 39 Stock shelters
- 40 Curie
- 41 Carpetbagger's cohort, perhaps
- 43 Gemstones
- 44 Bowler

**DOWN**

- 1 Hyalite
- 2 \_\_\_ light
- 3 Incendiary disposal area, once
- 4 Like jam and jerky
- 5 Not together
- 6 Cal and Georgia
- 7 Bewildered
- 8 Tarts
- 9 Sole savers
- 10 Neat
- 11 Molar magician
- 12 Spanish kin of eau and Wasser
- 13 Barbarian
- 21 Dueling weapon

- 25 Itin.
- 26 A Washington biographer
- 27 Of Icelandic epics
- 28 Hood's nemesis
- 29 Actor Arnold
- 30 To that time
- 31 Lallygags
- 33 Arrived late or unexpectedly
- 36 Cutter
- 37 Quarter penny
- 39 Limbo need
- 40 Kind of ball
- 42 Margin
- 43 Loud
- 45 Bad dog
- 46 Bright ring
- 47 He succeeded Haakon in 1957
- 49 Nineteenth-cent. era
- 50 \_\_\_ Sea
- 51 Pew area
- 52 One of the Hebrides

“We have a real connection with the school that has continued all through the negotiations. We had a great relationship with McNary beforehand, and we intend to continue to have one. It’s very important that two of the largest entities in Keizer cooperate and we have always been able to do that,”

Zerr said.

“We form our personalities and most of who we are in high school, we just don’t realize it until we leave. Having a good high school environment is really critical for the community.”

The school will also see improvements to plumbing and ventilation to go along with the garage door and select flooring replacements. There will be upgrades to the intercom and card access systems, as well as significant improvements to the seismic structure of areas of the school.

Other improvements include:

- Exterior seal.
- Expanded wireless capacity.
- Additional music support.
- Spaces to support special education.
- Increased visibility of the main entry from office.

“I am so excited for the new additions and improvements coming our way,” said McNary leadership student Mariah Benitez. “I especially can’t wait to take advantage of the additional classroom space, as this will support greater academic achievement.”

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