

# Kennedy breaks ground on renovations

BY MATT RAWLINGS  
Of the Keizertimes

After three years of waiting, Kennedy Elementary will undergo construction for their expansion this summer as part of the 2018 bond program.

An official groundbreaking ceremony, featuring school board members, local officials, school staff and community supporters, was held on Friday, June 4, to kick off the beginning of the expansion.

“As we kick off construction that will add much needed space and improve the learning environments here at Kennedy, I am thankful for, and proud to be a part of a community that cares so much for its students,” said Salem-Keizer Public Schools (SKPS) Superintendent Christy Perry. “Thanks to the support of our community, we are able to implement substantial changes to our district that will help reinforce the ultimate goal of preparing all students for a successful life after graduation.”

Kennedy, which was originally constructed in 1964, will be receiving seven new general education classrooms, meaning that the outdoor portable classrooms will be removed.

“All five of these ugly portables are going to be gone. No more putting on winter coats just to go to P.E and music. No more walking in the rain to get into the school from the portables, maybe just to use the restroom or to visit the office. And most importantly, no more separation from our main facility. We will all be connected,”



Kennedy students Jadiel Lopez (left), Abigail Ceja (second to left) and Madison Adair (right) join principal Jesse Leonard in breaking ground on construction at the school.

Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

Kennedy principal Jesse Leonard said. “I know I speak on behalf of the whole staff when I say thank you. It really means a new beginning for us, for our community, for our school, and most importantly for our kids.”

Along with relieving overcrowding, the project also includes a new cafeteria and kitchen, as well as current classroom improvements, heating/ventilation improvements, roofing replacement, seismic upgrades and many other

improvements.

The plan is to also renovate the current cafeteria into a multipurpose space and relocate the playground and covered play structure.

“Thank you for supporting our students, this district and this bond,” said Danielle Bethell, the co-chair of the Salem-Keizer School Board.

Robinson Construction will be taking on the \$12.2 million project – the bond is worth \$619.7 billion and is the largest in

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Construction will begin this month and is scheduled to be substantially completed in the early fall of 2022.

“Kennedy is very special and this whole community has been working hard and I am so excited,” Keizer city councilor Roland Herrera said. “This has been great work that the school board has been doing with the bond money and I think it was well worth it. It is an investment in our community.”

For more information on the status of bond projects around the district, visit the SKPS website (salkeiz.k12.or.us).

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