

De La Salle's New Home

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Intent to a 50-year lease with two 25-year extensions. The school's move eastward coincides with a similar migration of low income and minority students in Portland in recent years due to gentrification, the state of the housing market, and other factors.

St. Charles Parish serves the ethnically diverse neighborhood of Cully, which is the largest neighborhood geographically of northeast Portland. Sixteen percent of its residents are black, and 21 percent are Hispanic or Latino, according to the 2010 census. Comparatively, over 80 percent of De La Salle's student body is comprised of people of color—including 33 percent African American and 38 percent Hispanic.

The selection of St. Charles for De La Salle comes after a search of 40 locations by the school's board of trustees, a months-long process following Portland Public School's announcement last May that they would not renew the Kenton lease.

De La Salle President Oscar Leong said he was pointed in the direction of St. Charles by Board Chair Patti O'Mara after taking up his position in July, having relocated here from California.

Leong told the Portland Observer that the opportunity for matching up a diverse St. Charles community with De La Salle North High School became apparent on a day he visited St. Parish for a church service.

"As I sat there, in celebration, and I watched the Mass happen, I looked around," he said. "The folks that were present were a collection of diverse backgrounds, racial backgrounds. I thought it was the perfect opportunity for both of us to come together and to bring energy to each other."

The St. Charles parish campus will have space to accommodate more than 350 students by the time it officially opens as a high school in 2021, a press release from De La Salle North said.

Though nothing has been made certain, Schwab said renovations of the former classrooms, as well



St. Charles Parish Priest Elwin Schwab is negotiating terms of an agreement to allow De La Salle North Catholic High School to relocate permanently to the former site of St. Charles Elementary at Northeast 42nd and Emerson in the Cully Neighborhood. The grade school was opened in 1950 and closed in 1986. Schwab has deep roots in the neighborhood. His family originally came to the area in the 1940s.

as possible structural additions, and changes to the parking lot, may be constructed in the years leading up to the opening.

Leong added that such renovations will need to adequately host high school programs, such as converting classrooms previously used for teaching grammar classrooms. The school is poised to launch a fundraising campaign to raise donations for the renovations and additions.

De La Salle North Catholic High School has been offering a private school experience to students and families who could not afford to attend the cost of one, since 2001. It uses a work-study component to offset the cost of tuition, making it a fraction of the cost of most other Portland private schools.

De La Salle North students go to school four days a week and work one day a week, which finances 50 percent of their edu-

cation. In addition, many of the students—all of whom come from families earning 75 percent of the median area income or lower—receive financial aid and full-ride scholarships.

De La Salle at St. Charles will return a high school to near the corner of Northeast 42nd and Killingsworth for the first time since 1981, when John Adams High School was closed by Portland Public Schools due to low enrollment after being opened in 1969.

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