

Community celebrates opening of new Harrison Elementary School

By Zach Silva
zsilva@cgsentinel.com

It was a day that was years in the making: the opening of the new Harrison Elementary School.

The South Lane School District bond measure passed in May of 2016 that ensured a new school building and after months of planning, building and preparing the brand-new building was open for members of the school community last Thursday.

“Well this is the moment I’ve been waiting for: to see the kids’ faces when they walk in. That’s the moment that has driven the project for me and so I am beyond words excited to have the kids in here,” said principal Heidi Brown.

Before students and families were welcomed in to roam the 81,000-sq. foot building, various community figures spoke in front of the crowd about their thanks to the community, those who worked on the project and ultimately about their excitement for what this school will do for the community.

“...this school is an investment in our community, in our children. And if you think about it, the kids that will be going through this school door next week will be our community leaders and we need to invest in our future,” said Cottage Grove



ZACH SILVA/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Students, school board members and school officials (above) join together in the official ribbon cutting ceremony to the new Harrison Elementary School Friday, which included an open house for the school community to get its first look (below).

mayor Jeff Gowing.

Principal Brown was able to further share what this structure signifies to students.

“This building project has been an incredible opportunity to send a message to our children, a message that I know is true for all students in the South Lane School District, in the state of Oregon and in our nation and around the world: you are valued. We believe in you,” she said.

Closing the speeches were



a pair of Harrison students including incoming fifth grader Oceana Taylor and fourth grader Jeffrey Con-

lin.

“I think I speak for everyone when I say I’m so excited and grateful to attend the brand new school. Happy learning, everyone. Woohoo,” said Oceana.

With an exuberant countdown from the crowd, Oceana and Jeffrey used a pair of large scissors to together cut the ribbon in front of the school and welcome those inside.

Once inside, students and parents alike quickly spread throughout the school as

they tried to take in everything from the common learning areas between classrooms of the same grade to the full-size gymnasium — with many students gravitating towards the new playground — as quickly as possible.

“To actually have people in this building is really nice. We’re ready, we’re ready to fill it up with kids and get going. And share all of this amazing space with the community,” said fifth grade teacher Deedra Huff.

Huff, who is in her 25th year teaching and fourth at Harrison, has seen this building progress as a member of the initial planning committee for the project. Since the bond passed she has seen the building go up in stages, has got to help shape what her classroom was going to look like and now is putting the finishing touches on her room.

“It’s been surreal because the problems that we have to deal with now is, ‘Oh, there’s too many tables for this new building’...So having those kinds of problem and no longer having scarcity issues that we were dealing with for a long time is just surreal. It’s wonderful,” said Huff.

Harrison Elementary will be hosting a community open house on Saturday Sept. 15 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tours will take place every 30 minutes.



EVERY CHILD HAS A CHANCE—IT’S YOU.®

Learn more at casa-lane.org

Volunteer as a Court Appointed Special Advocate.
A rewarding, professional volunteer opportunity in 10-15 hours a month helping foster children stay safe and healthy.

The next training class starts in January with applications due by December 7th.
For more information visit casa-lane.org or call 541.868.3087.



CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

LANE COUNTY

A powerful voice for abused and neglected children across Lane County

Brad's
COTTAGE GROVE



Chevy
CHEVROLET, INC.

Meet
BRETT WOODS & WINSTON



Brett has worked at Brad's since 2012 in the Parts Department. Brett is a graduate of Cottage Grove High School and is a big OSU Beavers Fan. Brett enjoys spending time with his new pup Winston, his Friends and family, Camping, BBQ's and Craft Beers.

CLIP & SAVE • CLIP & SAVE • CLIP & SAVE

OIL CHANGE SPECIAL

\$19.95 up to 6 qts of oil
Gas Engines Only.

Excludes Diesel Engines, Dexos & Synthetic Oils
With this coupon offer good through 9/28/18
Not Valid with any other offer.

Service Now Open Saturdays 8am-5pm
541-942-4415
2775 Row River Rd. • Cottage Grove
www.bradschevy.com

 Vehicle Care







 Find us on Facebook