

WOU education center ready for debut

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — The Richard Woodcock Education Center is bustling with activity, but not from students — not yet.

It's faculty and staff who are moving into the new building for Western Oregon University's Department of Education.

Dean of Education Mark Girod is excited to have a base of operations for the 800 education majors on campus, as well as the 500 graduate students.

"We were in three different buildings before," Girod said. "So for the first time ever, we will have all the College of Education



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer

For the first time, the College of Education's faculty and staff, including Dean of Education Mark Girod, will be under on roof.

faculty and staff under one roof."

It will provide an atmos-

phere of collaboration, he said.

"You know how it is, often

the most important conversations are the ones that happen ad hoc in the hall-

Education Center

- Faculty and staff are moving into the Richard Woodcock Education Center. The building is Western Oregon University's newest for the Department of Education.
- The building will serve as a base of operations for the 800 education majors on campus and the 500 graduate students.
- The 58,000-square foot building was part of former Gov. John Kitzhaber's wood products initiative and is one of the only projects in the state to use cross-laminated timber as a structural element.
- Nearly 100 offices and 23 classroom spaces are housed in the education center.

way," Girod said. "I'm really looking forward to that. There will definitely be some synergy and things that come from just being in the same place."

To encourage collaboration among students, faculty and staff, a number of

spaces have comfortable furniture and other amenities. A study nook sits in the walls. A fireplace welcomes visitors in the front lobby.

"The idea is we want people to kind of hang around," Girod said.

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Falls City to replace 12 faucets

School district receives lead testing results on 64 fixtures

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

FALLS CITY — The maintenance crew at Falls City School District will be busy replacing a dozen faucets after lead testing results returned last week.

Tests of 64 fixtures across all school buildings — high school, elementary school, gym and library-science buildings — found 12 taps with high levels of lead. Of those, six will be replaced immediately.

"We will be replacing anything that people would possibly drink from," Superintendent Jack Thompson said. "We'll be replacing those before school starts."

The other six are faucets students don't have access to or are not used.

"We will be changing those out here in the near future, but we may not get to

Falls City lead test results (those testing above 15 ppb)

- High School gym
- Girls locker room sink — 210 ppb*
- Women's restroom sink — 209 ppb*
- Concessions sink — 93 ppb*
- Falls City Elementary School
- Room 107 left sink — 31.8 ppb*
- Room 113 drinking fountain — 35.8 ppb*
- Falls City High School
- Cafeteria sink — 21.7 ppb*
- Room 21 sink — 27.3 ppb
- Room 21 sink — 32.7 ppb
- Room 21 sink — 103 ppb
- Room 21 sink — 54.8 ppb
- Library/Science building
- Science room sink — 20.6 ppb
- Science room sink — 16.4 ppb

*Will be replaced before school begins on Aug. 29.

that before school starts," Thompson said.

Thompson said he wasn't pleased to see fixtures testing high, but told the Falls City School Board on Aug. 16 he was thankful that the issues appeared to be isolated

to faucets, not building plumbing. If that were the case, fixing the problem would be much more complicated and expensive.

"The main thing I want the board and the community to understand is that

these are real isolated problems. We had 12 fixtures that tested too high," Thompson said. "Those are fixtures within buildings that test very, very low. Our buildings are healthy, the piping systems are healthy, but we have specific faucets because of their age or construction, that are bad."

Providing an example, he said one faucet was one-half of a side-by-side sink in the special education room at the high school. One faucet tested within acceptable limits while the other had too much lead.

"They are literally within inches of each other," Thompson said.

The high tests, those containing lead above 15 parts per billion (ppb), ranged from 16.4 ppb to the most at 210 ppb. The samples were collected on Aug. 5. Edge Analytical from Portland conducted the tests.

SCHOOL NOTES

Clothing, supplies giveaway Saturday

DALLAS — Jinett's Closet at Dallas New Life Church of the Nazarene will hold a back to school supplies and clothing giveaway on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 341 NE Kings Valley Highway.

Organizer Jinett Yeager said the supplies giveaway is for students who have not received assistance from other programs or resource. Clothing is available to anyone.

For more information: 971-283-0443.

SMART seeking volunteer readers

POLK COUNTY — Elementary schools in Dallas and Independence are seeking SMART (Start Making a Reader Today) volunteers for the 2016-17 school year.

SMART is an early literacy program using volunteers to read to students in grades preschool through third-grade. Volunteers are needed at Independence Elementary School in Independence and Lyle Elementary School and Oakdale Heights Elementary School in Dallas.

Volunteers are asked to give one hour a week at the same day and time each week during the school year, October to May.

To volunteer or for more information, 503-391-8423 or go to www.getSMARToregon.org.

EHCS needs help to open school

BALLSTON — Eola Hills Charter School is finally moving forward on opening its long-awaited permanent location in Ballston, but may need financial help to open the doors on Sept. 12.

The school's former location on Bethell Road in Polk County burned down in October 2013, and since then the school has occupied a number of temporary locations. Insurance money from the fire has been depleted, so the school has set up a go-fundme page to help pay for contractors to finish the job.

For more information or to donate, go to <https://www.go-fundme.com/2kccqda54>.



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