



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gregory-Portland Independent School District

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Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for New W.C. Andrews Elementary School
- Monday, January 7, 2019 @ 4:00 p.m. -

Gregory-Portland ISD students, staff, and administration will ring in the new year with the opening of the new W.C. Andrews Elementary School. The G-P community is invited to join in the celebration with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony planned for Monday, January 7, 2019. This event will take place at 4:00 p.m. the evening before the school opens for the first day of class in the new campus at 4015 Moore Avenue in Portland, Texas.

“After nearly 40 years at the former campus (on Lang Road), there is a lot of history moving from one location to another,” said Superintendent Dr. Paul Clore. “We are trying to honor that history while giving the W.C. Andrews school community a new facility we can all be proud of – one that meets their needs as we move into the future, with plenty of room to grow.”

At 81,997 square feet, the new campus is 40 percent larger than the former campus and was constructed on a five-acre plot of land acquired by the school district in 2017. The land was purchased, and the facility funded, as a result of community support of a Bond election held in May of 2015.

The budget to construct the new W.C. Andrews campus was \$25 million in 2015, and the district completed the project under budget at approximately \$23 million. The campus is equipped with a state-of-the-art security system and energy-efficient LED lighting. Every classroom is equipped with a 75-inch interactive, touchscreen television. Garza, Bomberger & Associates Architects from San Antonio, Texas, designed the new building, and construction was completed by Weaver & Jacobs Contractors from Cuero, Texas.

Among the enhancements students, staff, and community will notice is the amount of space and parking available, said Dr. Leslie Faught, Assistant Superintendent of School Leadership and Student Services. “The former campus had a very small cafeteria and auditorium space. This campus has a dedicated stage and backstage area, and a cafeteria and event space that can be extended to twice its size with an open partition to the gymnasium. Now, everyone can gather in one place with plenty of room.”

G-PISD Construction Manager David Batot said the school district has been working closely with the City of Portland and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to provide for needs including student safety when walking or commuting to the school. “We understand from TxDOT that they will be working to lower the speed limit on Moore Avenue (FM 0893) in 2019, and they have plans to widen that road from a two-lane to five-lane urban roadway from Stark Road (CR 3685) to Gum Hollow (CR 79). That expansion is currently scheduled for letting in May of 2020.”

To provide for student safety when the new campus opens, G-PISD hired contractors to add a right-turn lane into the campus off Moore Avenue until the TxDOT project begins. The district is also providing temporary bus transportation for students residing at Bridgepoint Apartments along Stark Road until the City of Portland finishes construction of a sidewalk. All other neighborhoods near the school have sidewalks accessible for students.

Meanwhile just prior to Winter Break, teachers and staff are busy moving into the new building. “We hired a moving company to do the heavy lifting for teachers, and they have transported large items as well as bulk supplies to the new campus,” said Velma-Soliz Garcia, Assistant Superintendent of



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Curriculum & Instruction. “Still, teachers have been packing for weeks and working hard to turn this new building into a school. Many of our district administrators were teaching in classrooms at W.C. Andrews so that teachers could have some time during the work day to unpack at the new campus. We can’t express enough how much we appreciate everyone’s hard work throughout this process.”

Dr. Clore agrees, stating the efforts made by teachers and staff are helping the district move forward on more than just this project. “It’s hard to move a school in the middle of a school year. However, doing so allows us to stay on schedule with other Bond 2015 projects promised to the community.”

After W.C. Andrews’ new campus is opened, the former facility will be used to house the Wildcat Learning Center and District Technology Department, making the former G-P Intermediate School vacant and ready for demolition in the Spring of 2019. “Then, the next big project begins – construction of the new G-P Middle School at the G-P Intermediate site on Wildcat Drive,” said Dr. Clore. “We’re also working on plans for a classroom addition and a Career & Technology Education (CTE) Training Center at G-P High School.

“Every step of the way, we are making improvements to give our students what they need today as well as in the future. There’s a lot going on, and a lot to be proud of here in G-P.”

EVENT DETAILS: W.C. Andrews Elementary School
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony w/ Brief Presentation & Tour of Facility
Monday, January 7, 2019 @ 4:00 p.m.
4015 Moore Avenue in Portland, Texas

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