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## **CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY IN HIGH GEAR ACROSS SEQUOIA DISTRICT**

REDWOOD CITY, Calif., August 19, 2009 - The summer months come to a close in the Sequoia Union High School District with a number of capital projects wrapping up and others that are just getting started.

"The schools in the Sequoia district are valued community resources, and we are excited to announce completion of some wonderful new facilities that will benefit students and the community at large," said Patrick Gemma, Ed.D., superintendent of the Sequoia district.

"While it's true that the state budget crisis continues to exact a toll on public schools, including in the Sequoia district, the community support of bond measures in the past few years have enabled building projects to continue on course," he added.

Most recently, Measure H passed in 2004, and Measure J passed in 2008.

### ***Menlo-Atherton performing arts center***

All but the finishing touches are complete on the much-anticipated performing arts center on the Menlo-Atherton High School campus. Grand opening festivities are planned for Oct. 9-11.

A unique collaboration with the City of Menlo Park allowed building of a facility that neither the school or city would otherwise have planned on its own. The partnership provided the city an alternative to rebuilding the Burgess Theater and instead make a smaller investment in an enhanced community facility that would be built on the centrally located school campus. Additional money continues to be raised for the project by the school's Foundation for the Future.

Inspired by the beauty of the historical grove of Valley Oak trees on campus, the 31,000-square-foot, 65-foot-high building has been carefully designed and landscaped to create a tree house-like environment and the impression it is following the contours of an already existing hillside.

Striking a balance of function, imagery, comfort and responsible allocation of natural resources, the center includes a 492-seat theater, lobby, box office, rehearsal and practice rooms, and stagecraft workshop for production of scenery and props. The facility also includes a glass-enclosed multiuse/cafeteria space. The wall of floor-to-ceiling glass doors surrounding the cafeteria open up to an expansive outdoor courtyard, which is situated among full grown trees and new plantings.

The theater boasts a professional-caliber fly tower for raising and lowering scenery; an orchestra lift to convert the stage for various types of productions or to extend the seating capacity; an orchestra pit accommodating up to 80 musicians; a robust lighting system with two catwalks for optimal control; state-of-the-art acoustics; and a professional, sound-proof control booth.

The building incorporates a range of energy efficient and sustainable features, including a heating and ventilation system that permits only specific zones to be heated or cooled as needed; an unconventional air distribution system that cools from the bottom up (to avoid unnecessary cooling to the rooftop); use of shaded glass and deep roof overhangs to reduce solar load on the building; and extra insulation to avoid heat loss during winter and heat gain in winter - all of which add up to less energy use than similarly sized buildings.

Sustainable features of the building include sealed concrete floors, materials manufactured from recycled wood-waste products, recyclable aluminum window mullions, and low-flow fixtures in the restrooms.

### ***Menlo-Atherton entrance & traffic project***

As students arrived this morning for the first day of fall classes, the school's new entrance and front parking lots are practically complete.

With its new four-foot-high masonry wall along 2,000 linear feet of Middlefield Road (from Oak Grove Ave. to Ringwood Ave.), the school now blends more seamlessly into the local neighborhood. The work completed this summer also helps to make the new construction on 4.5 acres of the campus more cohesive with the existing footprint and structures.

The campus-entrance project significantly improves traffic flow for students and staff as well as guests attending events at the new performing arts center and other activities on campus. The project also helps to make entry onto the campus more clear and creates new plazas for social gathering. Safety has been enhanced with various features of the project, including a coordinated lighting plan for walking paths, parking lots and signage.

Two new separate and distinct drop-off areas for students and visitors have been created to improve traffic flow and help eliminate the back-up of vehicles on adjacent streets. A new entrance at Ringwood Ave. has been moved to align it with the main driveway, and a new two-way roadway enhances circulation even further.

Landscaping plans called for involvement of an arborist and careful attention to the stately oak trees that have stood in their current location since long before the school was built in 1951. Along with preservation of the existing oaks, over 30 new oak trees were planted as part of the project, and an additional 120 trees were planted on the campus during the summer months. All plant material is hardy, water-wise, low-maintenance and appropriate for the regional climate.

### ***Carlmont music and art building***

Currently under construction at Carlmont High School is a two-story, 22,000-square-foot music and art building alongside the 21,000-square-foot performing arts center that opened in May.

The music and art building, which is slated to open in early 2010, provides facilities for band, orchestra and choir, including practice rooms and a recording studio, as well as art facilities for photography, drawing, painting and ceramics. The new facility will be certified as a LEED Gold building, one of the highest recognized sustainability standards for green design.

The adjoining Carlmont Community Performing Arts Center that opened in the spring provides state-of-the-art facilities for the school's renowned programs in theater, vocal and instrumental music, dance and speech. For the first time, the theater can accommodate all 13 of the school's performing ensembles.

The new 500-seat house is more than double the previous size, and the new orchestra pit, which is operated with a hydraulic lift that allows raising it to house level to increase seating capacity, accommodates up to 35 musicians. Professional-caliber lighting, acoustics and control booth are added features.

In addition, a 1,600-square-foot black-box theatre provides a secondary venue for more intimate productions as well as offers rehearsal and classroom space. Additional facilities include men's and women's dressing areas, a communal makeup room, green room, and box office. Public spaces include an entry lobby and art gallery on the north side of the building, with views of the school's heritage oak tree.

The new theater incorporates sustainable design features, such as day lighting, natural ventilation and green building materials. Finish materials include integrally colored concrete block and cement plaster, aluminum window walls with tinted glass, and built-up and metal roofs.

***Additional construction activity***

During the summer months, Woodside High School had new fencing and landscaping installed at the entrance as well as new landscaping in the quad, paving of roads and renovating of all campus restrooms.

By week's end, the finishing touches will be complete on the new school on Green St. in East Palo Alto. Ultimately planned to operate as a satellite of the Sequoia District Adult School, the campus has been offered for the fall's first freshman class of the new Everest charter school.

Also completed this week is a 4,000-square-foot biotechnology laboratory and classroom at Sequoia High School. A distinctive facility for a high school campus, the new laboratory includes lecture space, laboratory area, isolation room, plant room, office space and storage area.

Ground will be broken this fall on the 16,000-square-foot, 1,200-seat spectator gymnasium and outdoor athletics plazas at Sequoia High School. The building will accommodate physical education classes and a range of athletics programs, including basketball, volleyball and badminton.

Since 1995, \$333 million has been invested in facility and technology enhancements in the Sequoia district. By the end of June, \$39.5 million of the initial sale of the Measure J bond was still on hand and, in July, another \$40 million was received from a second issuance of the bond. A final bond issuance of \$55 million is tentatively planned for 2015.

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